

MAAIKE COTTERINK

# BEYOND FISHING

cooperation between artisanal and industrial fisheries in Senegal



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## List of abbreviations

CAPPAS	<i>Cellule d'Appui pour la Promotion de la Pêche artisanale à Santhiaba</i>
CBNRM	Community Based Natural Resource Management
CEE	<i>Communauté Economique Européenne</i>
CFFA	Coalition for Fair Fisheries Agreements
CNPS	<i>Collectif National des Pêcheurs Artisans du Sénégal</i>
CPR	Common Property Resource
CRODT	<i>Centre des Recherches Oceanographique Dakar-Thiaroye</i>
DOPM	<i>Direction de l'Océanographie et de la Pêche Maritime (now DPM)</i>
DPM	<i>Direction de la Pêche Maritime (former DOPM)</i>
DPSP	<i>Direction de la Protection et de la Surveillance des Pêches</i>
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EU	European Union
ESAM	<i>Enquête Sénégalaise Auprès des Ménages</i>
FCFA	<i>Franc de la Communauté Financière Africaine</i>
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNI	Gross Net Income
GRET	<i>Groupe de Recherche et d'Echanges Technologiques</i>
GRS	<i>Gouvernement de la République du Sénégal</i>
MCS	Marine Conservation Society
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NIE	New Institutional Economics
NRM	Natural Resource Management
OEPS	<i>Observatoire Economique de la Pêche au Sénégal</i>
PDU	Plan Directeur Urbain de la commune de Saint Louis
PNUE	<i>Programme des Nations Unies pour l'Environnement</i>
RGPH	<i>Recensement Général de la Population et de l'Habitat</i>
SRPS	<i>Service Régionale de la Prévision et de la Statistique</i>
TOC	Tragedy of the Commons
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
USD	United States Dollar
WAMER	Western Africa Marine EcoRegion
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

## Preface

*Ndank ndank moy djappe gole ci njay.* “It is slowly that one catches a monkey in the bush”. In other words; if one wants to reach something, one will have to proceed slowly, but with certainty. This *Wolof* verb was one of my motto’s during my fieldwork and the writing of this thesis. Whenever people asked how things went with my research, I told them that things were progressing with small but certain steps. However, sometimes the monkey that I was trying to catch ran out of my sight and I had to find my route again. I would not have been able to proceed however if it was not for the help, assistance, patience, time and friendship of many people, whom I would like to thank here.

Premierement je voudrais remercier Madiama Sylla; ta part dans cette recherche est énorme. Merci pour m’apprendre tant de choses et pour m’amener partout à Thiaroye. Surtout aussi merci pour ton amitié. En plus, les familles Mbaye et Niang à Thiaroye ont été très accueillant, merci pour votre *teranga* chaleureux, l’équipe des *hooligans* pour m’amener pêcher et pour votre amitié. Vous avez rendu mon temps à Thiaroye inoubliable. Aussi Abdoulaye Samba de la Fenagie Pêche doit être mentionné pour m’introduire à Thiaroye. Merci à Moustapha Sene pour me mettre en contact avec sa famille à Saint Louis. Je voudrais remercier la famille Warr, la famille Sene et la famille Niasse de Saint Louis. Merci pour votre hospitalité et pour m’aider à trouver mon chemin à Saint Louis. En particulier Assane Niasse et Adbourahman Gueye pour vos informations sur la ville de Saint Louis et l’aide de trouver une place à Gokhou Mbathie. Modou, *diadieuf* pour tout ce que tu as fait pour m’aider, excuses pour ton déménagement obligé...Merci aux autorités locales pour leur temps et informations.

A Dakar je suis reconnaissante à tout l’équipe de Enda Dialogues Politiques (Diapol) pour m’accueillir et pour être en *dialogue* avec moi sur mes recherches. Un très grand merci à la Direction de la Protection et de la Surveillance des Pêches (DPSP) pour partager avec moi leurs informations et idées. J’apprécie qu’au niveau du Ministère de la Pêche et la Direction des Pêches Maritimes (DMP) on m’a donné l’occasion d’avoir des interviews. Au Centre des Recherches Océanographique Dakar-Thiaroye (CRODT) je remercie Djiby Thiam pour son aide.

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All these people have helped me to catch this monkey, I would not have been able to do this without them. Now it is here, and I hope the result was worth your efforts.

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## Introduction

Very little studies in social sciences have been concerned with the consequences of these changes [the arrival of industrial fisheries] for the artisanal fisheries, except for insisting on real but quite trivial problems of competition and pressure on the resources. Yet the theme of relations between the dynamics of industrial fisheries and those of artisanal fisheries lends itself for interesting questions from the point of view of institutional analysis. (Chauveau & Jul-Larsen, 2000 : 64)<sup>1</sup>

The theme of relations between the dynamics of artisanal and industrial fisheries in Senegal is the exact theme of this thesis. It is understandable that more attention has been driven and been given to, indeed real, problems of competition and pressure on resources. It is quite common discourse to perceive of artisanal and industrial fisheries as opponents, not only in scientific and political debate, but also on the beaches and in the harbours in Senegal. Even more, industrial fisheries are often represented as being a threat for artisanal fisheries, as is the case for example in the debate about the fishery agreements between the European Union (EU) and Senegal<sup>2</sup>. With this in mind it is not complementarity or cooperation between the two that one would think of immediately. However, cooperation does exist, but has indeed been subject to very little study, not only from a sociological point of view, but also in other domains of study. It seems as if the theme of cooperation has been more or less ignored.

It has not gone totally unnoticed however. In 1984 it was already observed that: “It is impossible to separate artisanal fisheries and industrial fisheries, so numerous are their interactions, which are constituted of factors of balance that are complementary and comprehensive” (Aubertin, 1984: 108). Chauveau made a similar statement in 1986: “In reality, the relations between industrial and artisanal fisheries are at the same time characterised by complementarity, competition and coexistence, of which the opposition paradigm that defines one by the other, is obviously unaware” (1986: 272). It is this characteristic of complementarity however, that has not received much attention in sociological studies, as this same Chauveau remarked in the opening quote of this introduction. When it did receive attention, this was mostly focussed on the furnishing of industrial factories by artisanal fisheries or on the question of the usefulness of making a distinction between the two (see Aubertin, 1984, Chauveau, 1986, Chauveau & Jul-Larsen, 2000). In Senegal however, there are also forms of complementarity between artisanal and industrial fisheries that take place on the level of the fishing activity itself. This research, which was carried out in Senegal from November 2003 till May 2004, has focussed on these forms of complementarity.

Before going further, I will make clear what is meant by complementarity and cooperation in this thesis. These are two concepts that are close to each other. Complementarity can be defined

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<sup>1</sup> All quotes that are originally in French have been translated in English by me.

<sup>2</sup> See for an evaluation on the fisheries agreements Catanzano et.al. (1999). For a study on the future of the fishery relations between the EU and ACP countries, see Gorez et.al. (2003). Johnstone (1996) has made an inquiry about the economics of the fisheries agreements between the EU and Senegal. The Coalition for Fair Fisheries Agreements (CFFA) is campaigning for a reform or even a ban on these agreements, for more information and papers visit their website [www.cape-cffa.org](http://www.cape-cffa.org). For information on the reform of the Common Fishery Policy visit the website of the EU [www.eu.int/comm/fisheries/reform/index\\_en.htm](http://www.eu.int/comm/fisheries/reform/index_en.htm).

as ‘the interrelation of reciprocity whereby one thing supplements or depends on the other’ (WordNet, 2003). Another definition of complementarity is ‘mutually supplying each others lack’ (Merriam-Webster’s, 2005). In both definitions it is central that the coming together of two entities creates a supplement to one or both of them. Most important of this concept is that it does not necessarily mean that the two entities are acting on the same level. Cooperation is related to complementarity, and is defined as ‘acting or working with another or others’ (Merriam-Webster’s, 2005). In some definitions, the common enterprise or project on which is worked on, is added as well (WordNet, 2003). In this thesis, cooperation is used as the ‘verb’ of complementary action. However, both complementarity and cooperation have a rather ‘positive’ connotation. Yet, the complementary relations that are treated in this thesis are not without conflict or problems, nor does there exist an equal ‘partnership’ in these relations. So, cooperation and complementarity are used in this thesis to point at the joint action between the artisanal and industrial fisheries, whereby has to be kept in mind that this is not always without conflict.

The emphasis on competition and pressure on the resources both stem from the same idea. In the scientific and political debate fisheries are always embedded in natural resource management theories. These theories all have a ‘tragedy of the commons’ idea at their base, whether these support this idea or not. This idea was presented by Hardin in 1968, who predicted that every natural resource, which is openly accessible for people to be used for their own benefit, would eventually degrade and disappear. This idea, its critics and its meaning for this thesis will be elaborated in the next chapter. For now it is sufficient to note that one of the core critics on this idea has been that Hardin forgot that people who exploit the same resource have contact with each other and are able to organise themselves. Through this organisation it is believed that the natural resource can be managed and the ‘tragedy’ will be averted. The contact that was there between different users of the resource was thus used from the objective of the management of the resource and not from the contact itself, what this contact meant or what it looked like. It was solely seen as a way of developing a common protection or regulation of access to the resource, taking the pressure on the resource that was created by its users as a point of departure. Other scholars have been more concerned with the livelihood of people who are dependent on this resource. They have looked more closely to what might enhance or endanger the access of these people to this resource. From this point of view, it is logical to perceive of other, more powerful or wealthier users of the resource as competitors and to focus on the conflict.

This is not to say that both pressure on the resource and competition or conflict are non-existent or un-important. On the contrary, these are real and existent problems in Senegal and still deserve attention and research. However, the emphasis on these problems diverted attention from forms of cooperation that have evolved between artisanal and industrial fisheries in Senegal, thus creating a lack of awareness and knowledge about this. Yet these complementary relations give rise to interesting questions. Why would people that are described and presented as being each others most fierce competitors, cooperate with one another? On which level does this take place? Who benefits from this and who does not? This study attempts to fill that lack of knowledge by answering the following central question: *What forms of cooperation have evolved between artisanal and industrial fisheries in Senegal and what is their impact on different actors in society?*

When I started this research in November 2003, I did not look solely at complementary relations between artisanal and industrial fisheries in Senegal as well. My central question was broader, focussing on every form of interaction that existed between artisanal and industrial fisheries, thus



looking at conflict and competition as well as complementary relations. After an exploratory phase, I chose to focus my fieldwork on two forms of cooperation and on the way in which conflict is settled. When I came back and was preparing this thesis however, I decided to only focus on the forms of complementarity in this thesis. This way, it would become more consistent and furthermore it gave me the opportunity to reflect on this theme of cooperation alone and on what this meant for the fisheries sector in Senegal. The additional information that I had gathered served as background information and as a touchstone for my observations and reflections.

Two forms of cooperation will be treated in this thesis; the practice of bait fishing by artisanal fishermen for industrial tuna vessels and the practice of the so-called *pêche au ramassage*<sup>3</sup>. I chose to research these two forms because of several reasons. First of all, both forms are existing since a long period of time; respectively since eight and twenty-five years. Secondly, they both take place on the level of the fishing activity itself. However, and this is my third reason, the institutional dimension that these have created and are still creating, goes beyond these fishing activities. These processes and relations between people, places and things make these forms of cooperation to be what they are. Further, because of their visibility and the involvement of the authorities in them, these provided an excellent insight into how these practices proceed and how the authorities handled these ‘exceptions to the rules’. A final reason was that, as is literally mentioned by Chauveau and Jul-Larsen with regard to the *pêche au ramassage*: “these are (...) domains of investigation that have been little or not at all explored” (2000: 66). The *pêche au ramassage* has been mentioned several times in different kinds of literature, but has not recently been subject to real study (for example see Diallo, 1993, Kebe et.al. 1991, Tall and Gueye, 1992).

Only one sociologist has seriously researched the *pêche au ramassage*, but this was twenty years ago (see Sene, 1985). However, at that time it was not at the centre of his research, since he studied it as part of the ways of live of fishermen. More recently he has prepared an introductory working paper to this subject, on the occasion of a symposium organised by the Observatory of Seafarers Rights in Nantes (Sene, 2004). Even more, the practice of bait fishing has never been subject of any study nor is it mentioned otherwise. These choices made that I did not look at the delivering of fish to industrial fisheries for example, nor did I research fishermen who occasionally have contact with industrial vessels to buy their bycatch at sea. Before going into the subquestions and the methodological choices of my research, I will give a short outline of the artisanal and industrial fisheries sector in Senegal.

## Short introduction to the Senegalese fisheries sector

The following quote gives a quite clear introduction in the theme of the artisanal ‘versus’ industrial fisheries in Senegal:

One can notice quite soon that the industrial sector and the artisanal sector interpenetrate, as much on the level of their zones of operation as on the levels of the criteria that characterise them, that the most productive is not the one we think it is and that the process of accumulation and investment, sign of good health of a modern industry, is rather situated in the activity of the traditional fisheries. (Aubertin, 1984: 111)

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<sup>3</sup> *Pêche au ramassage* can be translated as ‘assembled fishery’, for a description see section 3.1.1

In other words, the artisanal fisheries sector is more successful and even more modern in comparison with industrial fisheries than is always assumed<sup>4</sup>. Yet the Senegalese government has tried in the past to ‘modernise’ the artisanal fisheries sector, for example through the development of small coastal trawlers that would “equip fishermen or individuals that are close to the fisheries sector with modern boats, thereby making the artisanal sector evolve, of which the propensity for spontaneous innovation was considered to be very weak (Chauveau, 1986: 270)”. These attempts to modernise the artisanal sector have failed however, which was partly due to the initiation of motorisation of the artisanal fleet in the same period, in 1965. From then on, outboard motors were sold duty-free and on credit (UNEP, 2002). These motors enabled fishermen to go further at sea, to stay away longer and to fish more. In addition, it enabled the use of other fishing gear, such as purse seines, which were introduced in 1960. Consequently, fishermen started to build bigger *pirogues*<sup>5</sup>, which are able to carry up to twenty tons of fish. Today it is estimated that ninety percent of the artisanal fleet is motorised (Ibid.). Consequently, investments had to rise as well. It is estimated that a complete artisanal purse seine unit, including two *pirogues*, a net, a motor and additional gear cost € 24,235 in 1999. This is clearly the most expensive type of fishery, since other types (surrounding gill nets, lines, angling, dormant net and pot fishing) varied between € 8658 and € 5713 in the same year (UNEP, 2002: 32). Fishmongers are often investors in the artisanal sector, through the purchase of purse seine units.

The productivity of the artisanal fleet, consisting of 7616 maritime *pirogues* in 2000 (DOPM, 2001), thus rose enormously as well. In 1982 it accounted for 58.4 percent of the fish caught, rising till 80 percent in 2004 (Johnstone, 1996, FAO, 2004). Also, it is estimated that while the artisanal sector provided for 46 percent of the exportations in 1983, this had risen till 60 percent in 1998 (Deme 1983, in: Chauveau & Jul-Larsen, 2000: 65). Over 420 thousand people are directly or indirectly employed in the artisanal fisheries sector (Fenagie, n.d.). In 1955 the administrative reports already agreed that “on the economic level it is still the artisanal fisheries that have triumphed. (...) We have always wanted to oppose African fisheries and industrial fisheries, thinking that the latter would kill the former, while the contrary has come about” (Chauveau, 1986: 272). In terms of growth, volume of fish caught and connectedness to the international market, one can state that the artisanal sector still outscores the industrial sector. The rising of importance of the artisanal sector caused the creation of several artisanal fisheries organisations in the late eighties, in order to represent the artisanal sector on a political level. The two most important organisations are the *Fédération Nationale des GIE de Pêche du Sénégal* (Fenagie Pêche) and the *Collectif National des Pêcheurs Artisans du Sénégal* (CNPS).

The development of the industrial fisheries sector is quite complex. The industrial sector can be broken down into a national and a foreign (EU and non-EU) vleet, consisting of trawlers, seiners and tuna-vessels. However, the majority of the national Senegalese vleet consists of European and Chinese vessels that were ‘senegalised’, that is, have exited their vleet of origin, to be reflagged in the Senegalese vleet (Gorez, 2003). The vleet size has strongly fluctuated over the years, as Figure 1.1 shows<sup>6</sup>.

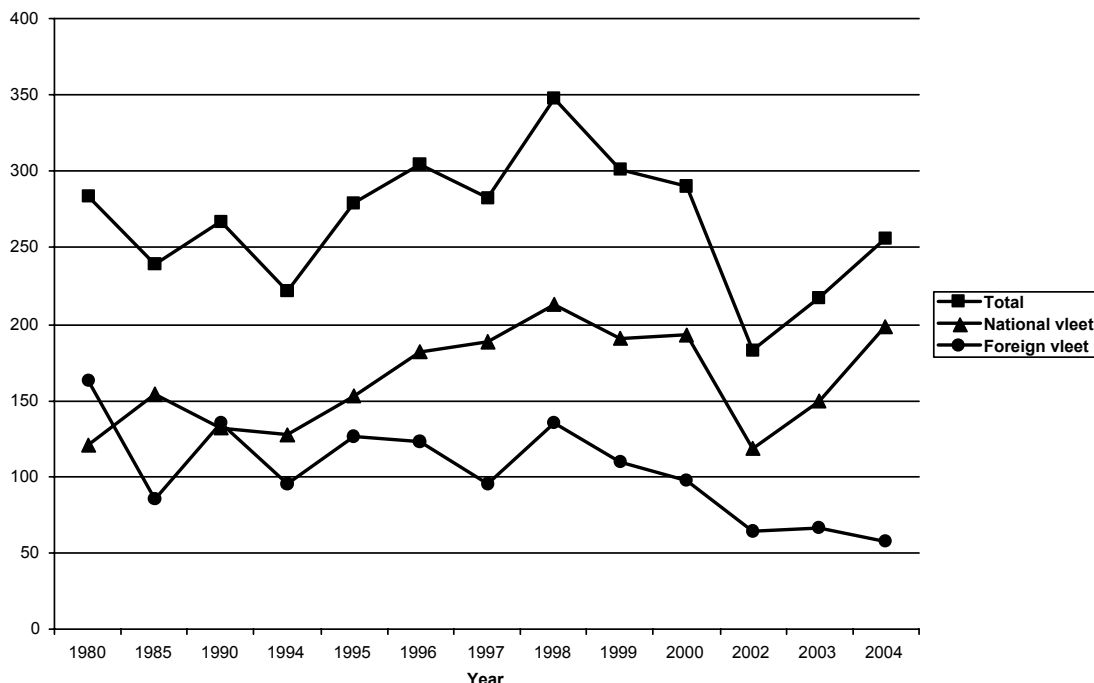
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<sup>4</sup> For a study on the local dynamics of artisanal fisheries in Senegal see De Vries, 2003, *La mer est pour nous tous, Local Dynamics in the Senegalese artisanal fisheries sector*.

<sup>5</sup> A *pirogue* is a wooden ‘canoe’; measuring in length from two up to forty metres and can contain one up to forty people.

<sup>6</sup> The exact figures on which this graph is based can be found in Table 1.1 in Appendix I.

Figure 1.1 Development of Senegalese Industrial Fisheries



Source: for the years 1980 – 1990, DPM in: UNEP 2002: 53, for the years 1994 – 2004, DPSP

With a peak of 348 vessels in total of which 213 national vessels in 1998, a record was attained in the history of the size of the Senegalese industrial fleet. In 2004 the total has dropped to 256 vessels, of which 198 national, 55 European and three non-European vessels<sup>7</sup>. In 2001, 390.000 tonnes of fish were debarked, of which 330.000 tonnes were caught by the artisanal sector and 60.000 by the industrial sector. Over one hundred thousand tonnes were exported, worth 247 million euro.

Both the artisanal and the industrial fisheries are fishing in the waters of the Senegalese Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)<sup>8</sup>. However, not everyone is allowed to fish everywhere. All industrial vessels, except for so-called tuna pole-and-line vessels, are prohibited of fishing in the area between the coast and six sea miles off coast. Thereby this zone is ‘reserved’ for artisanal fisheries. Artisanal fisheries have free access to the resource and they are allowed to leave their reserved zone as well. In the past, artisanal fisheries were mostly targeting small pelagic<sup>9</sup> species, such as sardinella. Flat and round sardinellas still made up 63.6 percent of the total catches of the artisanal fleet in 1993, and in that year it was already estimated that this number would decline in favour of noble demersal<sup>10</sup> species living nearby the coast ((DOPM RGPMS 1993, in Johnstone, 1996). This seems indeed to be the case today, as is noticed that artisanal fisheries are shifting from the catching of fish that are consumed locally (the pelagics) to species that are exported (the

7 These figures are not without irregularities however, since the figures of the DPM are differing from those of the DPSP in some cases. For example, in 1994 the DPM recorded a total of 239 vessels and the DPSP only 222. In 1998 it was the DPM that was modest with 251 vessels against 348 of the DPSP.

8 EEZ: An area of 200 sea miles off the coast of coastal countries, fixed by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) in 1982.

9 Surface-dwelling fish such as anchovies and sardines.

10 Bottom-dwelling fish such as cod and haddock.

demersals), since the latter have a higher value added (PNUE, 2004). Since over seventy percent of the local industrial fleet targets these same coastal demersal species, this has caused overexploitation of this resource (Ibid.). The European fleet is mainly targeting tuna, with more than three quarters of the fleet being tuna vessels (37 vessels). Nine vessels (18 percent) are aiming at profound demersal species. Only four remaining percent of the vessels is directly competing with the artisanal and national industrial fleet by fishing coastal demersal species as well. With regard to the state of these stocks it is noticed in 1994 that the small pelagic stock was over-exploited in the *Petite Cote* (Johnstone, 1996). Further, in 2003 it was stated “the overcapacity in the fishery sector combined with the phenomenon of the scarcity of the resource imperatively has to appeal to energetic and courageous rehabilitation measures, in order to avoid a situation that is irreversible” (OEPS, 2003: 1).

Artisanal fishermen make use of different fishing techniques. Next to the purse seine, also handlines, fixed nets, gillnets, beach seines and fish pots are commonly used by artisanal fishermen<sup>11</sup>. It is not unusual to practice more than one type of fishery during the year, since the seasons and consequently the types and amounts of fish vary. Senegal knows a period of *upwelling*, during which cold waters that are rich in nutritious salts and plankton rise to the surface. From November till June this phenomenon causes richness in fish in the Senegalese waters (GRET, 2000). Not only the abundance in fish has its consequences on the fishing possibilities, but also other natural phenomena, such as the position and the fullness of the moon. Because of this, fishermen are flexible in the combination of fishing techniques. One can see a fisherman fish with a handline in his small *pirogue* one day, to see him being member of a crew on a purse seine *pirogue* the next day. However, there are fishermen as well who practice one specific type of fishery.

Even though artisanal fishermen are often represented as a group, they are not a homogenic group. The differences in position can already be discerned in an artisanal fishing unit: there is a difference between the captain, the steersman, the ‘ordinary’ fishermen and the children on board. In addition, the owner of the material (*pirogue*, motor and nets) does not necessarily need to be present during the fishing activities, but will get his share of the revenue. One example of the sharing of this revenue is its division in three parts. One third is destined for the owner of the material and the rest is shared amongst the crew, whereby the captain mostly receives more, and children receive half a part. In addition, conflicts, whether big or small, exist as well between fishermen with different types of fishery. As one fisherman said: “Each fisherman thinks that his fishery is not working because of the other”. An extreme example of conflict between artisanal fishermen practicing different fishing techniques is a long-lasting conflict between fishermen from Kayar and Saint Louis that has recently escalated again<sup>12</sup>.

Artisanal fisheries are not without risk. The *Direction de la Protection et Surveillance des Pêches* (DPSP) recorded 473 fishermen who had lost their lives at sea between 1992 and 2002, this is three people per month. During my fieldwork I have heard several stories of fishermen drifting in the sea for numerous days, because of a broken down motor. Fortunately these fishermen were picked up by other *pirogues*, the coastguard or industrial vessels. Accidents

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<sup>11</sup> See appendix II for a more detailed description of these types of fishery. See PNUE (2004) p. 42 – 49 for a social and environmental impact of these types of fishery.

<sup>12</sup> On 12 June 2005 one person got killed and twenty people were injured in a fight between fishermen and gendarmes in Kayar. A long-lasting conflict between fishermen from Saint Louis who were fishing with gill nets in Kayar, nets that are prohibited by the local community of Kayar, caused this. A *pirogue*, belonging to fishermen from Saint Louis, was set on fire by the fishermen from Kayar and the interventions of the police had escalated. (IZF, 2005)

happen with fire in *pirogues* as well, when fire is needed to make tea, cook or sometimes warn industrial vessels of their presence at night. Fire is made with fuel in *pirogues* and since this spills and drips easily, it can go wrong easily as well. Between 1992 and 2002 38 collisions between *pirogues* and industrial vessels were registered at the DPSP. Since near-collisions are not registered figures about this are not available, but I have heard several stories about this. However, one fisherman said about these dangers: “Staying in your bed is not safe as well. I feel safer in my *pirogue* than in a car” (fieldnotes, 2004). In addition, there is a certain insecurity with which fishermen have to live. It is never sure whether the catch will be good, and even if the catch is good, this does not mean that one will get a lot of money for it. It occurs quite often that high prices are offered to fishermen who are the first to arrive at the beach to sell their fish, and while they choose to wait to see the prices rise, instead these are just declining. They are then forced to sell their fish for a much lower price than they could have if they had sold their fish immediately.

To conclude, the entire Senegalese fishery sector offers a livelihood to six hundred thousand people, who are directly or indirectly involved in fisheries. This is 15 percent of the Senegalese working population (UNEP, 2002). Further, the fisheries sector as a whole accounts for 2,5 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). In addition, fishery products are the principal source of proteins of the Senegalese population, accounting for 75 percent of the protein intake. The fishery sector is thus important in Senegal in many ways. The image that was delineated in this short introduction to the Senegalese fisheries sector, is the global background against which the activities and situations that will be described in the fieldwork chapters of this thesis can be placed.

## Objectives and research questions

As was pointed out earlier, the emphasis on problems of competition and conflict between artisanal and industrial fisheries caused a lack of awareness and knowledge about forms of cooperation that have evolved between artisanal and industrial fisheries in Senegal. This is unfortunate, since several examples of this kind of relationships can show how people in situations of uncertainty can react to new possibilities in a flexible and pragmatic way. They also could give us an insight in how different people assume power in relation to others, and how they use different institutional arrangements to retain or strengthen that power. Besides, it is a goal in itself to document these relationships, because no one ever really did it.

As a consequence, the objectives of this research are both theoretical and socio-political. The theoretical objective of this research is to contribute to a better understanding of complex social situations and interactions, which are characterised by ambiguous and overlapping relations and processes between people. Further insight will be given into how institutional processes shape the actions of people in situations of insecurity and risk. The socio-political objective is to get to policy recommendations in the field of fisheries in Senegal, in particular with regard to the forms of cooperation that were studied.

In this thesis the following central question will be answered:

*What forms of cooperation have evolved between artisanal and industrial fisheries in Senegal and what is their impact on different actors in society?*

This central question can be broken down in the following subquestions:

1. *How are these forms of cooperation shaped?*
  - 1.1. Why did these come into existence?
  - 1.2. How did these come into existence?
  - 1.3. Who is involved in these practices?
  - 1.4. What is happening in these practices?
  - 1.5. Which events are re-occurring in these practices?
2. *To what extent are different actors involved benefiting from these forms of cooperation?*
  - 2.1. Who is (not) benefiting from these practices?
  - 2.2. In what way are they (not) benefiting from these practices?
  - 2.3. Why are they (not) benefiting from these practices?
3. *In what way do these forms of cooperation influence local dynamics?*
  - 3.1. How do local actors perceive of these practices?
  - 3.2. How does this influence their perception of the state?
  - 3.3. How does this influence the way in which a campaign is received, which is partly implemented by the state?
4. *In what way do authorities react to these forms of cooperation?*
  - 4.1. Which policies do exist on these practices?
  - 4.2. To what extent are authorities involved in the regulation of these practices?
  - 4.3. What differences exist between policy and practices in relation to these practices?

The central question will be answered on two levels. First of all, the social practice of the two forms of cooperation that were researched will be described and explained (subquestion 1). The actors involved will be identified as well as their respective interests and benefits with this involvement (subquestion 2). On a second level the questions will go into how these practices are perceived by different people, in the first case (chapter 3) by local people and the impact this has on other local dynamics (subquestion 3) and in the second case by the authorities and how they handle this situation (chapter 4 and 5, subquestion 4). This second level thus tries to put these practices in a broader perspective in order to understand what they mean and how they influence different parts of society. Semi-official documents, such as a contract and a ministerial letter, will be used as important analysis tools on both levels, in order to show the differences between what is said or described in these documents and the complex realities that these try to shape or change.

## Research Methods

To answer the central research question I carried out research in Senegal from November 2003 until May 2004. In those seven months I carried out three case studies, two of which appeared relevant for this thesis. The first case study took seven weeks and took place in Thiaroye, a fishermen district near Dakar. In Thiaroye I studied the cooperation between artisanal fisheries

and industrial tuna fisheries, whereby the artisanal fishermen are fishing the bait for nearly all the tuna-vessels operating in Senegal.

In Saint Louis, a town in the North of Senegal on the frontier with Mauritania, I carried out my second case study. Here it was the so-called *pêche au ramassage* that was at the centre of my research. This form of cooperation exists for more than twenty-five years. As I stated before, strangely enough this particular kind of fisheries has never really been studied. In short, this form of cooperation involves an industrial freezer-trawler that takes on board 40 *pirogues*, including their crews, which consists of five or six young men per *pirogue*. This means that there are over 200 people on a single trawler. The vessel sails to the waters of countries like Guinea, Sierra Leone, Gabon and the Ivory Coast. When they arrive at the country of choice, they unload the *pirogues* and the artisanal fishermen go out fishing. Each day they come back to tranship the fish they caught and sell it to the vessel. After three months of fishing they return to Saint Louis. There are around ten of those vessels, called *bateaux de ramassage*, and they are mostly managed by Koreans. A large institutional framework has arisen around this practise of *pêche au ramassage*, along with a lot of problems. During a total period of five weeks I conducted my research in Gokhou Mbathie, one of the fishermen's districts of Saint Louis. In addition, when I returned to Dakar I had several interviews with the authorities about this practice.

During my research I used different methods and techniques to gather information. In the first, exploratory phase of my research, I used semi-structured interviews with a topic-list and interviewed fishery experts, scientists, representatives and politicians in order to get a bird's eye view of the sector. The more I got to know about the fisheries sector and the interactions, the more specific I could be in my topics and questions.

In Thiaroye as well as in Saint Louis a second exploratory phase began. I first had to construct a general view on the situation, to know what was happening and what were the most common felt opinions about it, before I could ask more specific questions. For this I did not work with structured or semi-structured interviews however. Most of the time I went to the houses of fishermen or to the beaches, to sit down and have an informal talk about the things I was interested in, as well as the things the fishermen were dealing with at that time. Sometimes I jotted down some topics that I had to discuss with them in my notebook beforehand; this could be considered as an informal topiclist. In Thiaroye I got to meet the right people through the intermediating of a befriended fisherman, who played a key role in my research in Thiaroye. He also translated the conversations from Wolof to French and the other way around. I chose not to tape the conversations in order to keep the formalised character of the conversations as low as possible. Also, this gave me the time to think about further questions while writing down the information that was translated. I used my tape recorder just once; to tape a meeting between fishermen and notables in Thiaroye, which was fully in Wolof. I also assisted to some informal groupdiscussions with befriended fishermen in their homes. Sometimes my remarks or questions were at the origin of the debate, sometimes there was already a debate going on when I entered the room.

In both villages I used observations, which were partly participatory. When I went out fishing for example, I did not take part in the actual fishing, but I observed the activities and talked to the fishermen. In Thiaroye I went bait fishing two times, once I assisted to gillnet fishing, two times I went purse seine fishing and several times I observed beach seine fishing. Once I went purse seine fishing at night, this was a very clarifying experience. While I thought we were safe because we could still see the lights of Dakar, it suddenly appeared to me that this did not matter at all. If something would happen, no one would see or hear us. Even though this was my first time of fishing at night and fishermen are used to this, it was the first time that I actually got

a sense of this risk myself. Besides interviews, chats and observations I gathered and studied various documents, such as contracts, journal articles, listings, ministerial letter, laws, posters and studies. Some of these documents served as side information, others play a crucial role in this thesis as analysing tools.

By the use of methodological and data triangulation, I crosschecked the information that I had gathered. Hart (1996: 168) defines triangulation as “describing and studying of the same object from different points of view”. In this research the ‘objects’ of study were social situations, and the different points of view were gained by using various methods for the same question or through posing different people the same question. However, this did not mean that I always found the same information through triangulation. On the contrary, as chapter four and five will show, there is a big difference in what is written and what is done for example. The same accounts for people that are involved in the same social situation, but who occupy different positions in this situation. They will account of this situation in a different way. By interviewing several people who occupy the same position and by combining these views it became possible to construct a viable and reliable picture of this social situation. Another point is of importance here. Especially in the case of the *pêche au ramassage* people had varied interests in telling their stories in a certain way. This practice is a quite sensible subject and many people had either something to lose, gain or hide while talking to me. I was and still am aware of this and have tried to find a balance between the different, interest-laden accounts of the same situation.

In Thiaroye and Dakar my research went quite smoothly; I did not encounter big problems searching people to interview, people were open and easy to talk with and I had received an enormous help of my ‘key-informant’. However, when I arrived in Saint Louis, I did not yet have any contact with fishermen and lived with a family on the outside of Saint Louis. It was therefore more difficult to get a grip on the situation and to gain the confidence of fishermen. The community is quite closed and people do not like to talk much about the *pêche au ramassage*. Even more, people in the fishermen’s district perceived of me either as a tourist, since Saint Louis has a very touristic area as well, or as a development worker who came to ‘implement development programs’. This started to change when I went living with a fishermen’s family in the district, but even then it was not as easy as in Thiaroye. By coincidence I met someone who saw my struggle and who was willing to help me. Through him I finally did get access to people I wanted to talk with. Sadly enough, he had to move to another room because of me, since the proprietor of his room did not like white people. This is an extreme example, but this event did not amount to a positive feeling.

However, I found my time in Saint Louis one of the most inspiring and interesting parts of my research, even though it was not always easy. It might even be because it was not always easy, since this forced me to reflect on my own attitude and way of doing research and it made me even more curious about the things that I was researching. So in the end it was more a blessing than a curse, in terms of experience and learning.

### Outline of the thesis

Finally, the information I have gathered around and about my central question will be set forth in this thesis, in order to answer this central question. This will be done in the following way: Chapter One will discuss the theoretical choices I made and the way in which I used this theory in my research and thesis. The opposition between ‘biological’ and ‘sociological’ scholars and



the (ir)relevance of their observations and ideas will be explored. By critics on the basis of both of these ‘schools’ it is explored in what way the studied social practices can best be studied and interpreted. To get a most complete picture as possible, I have chosen to look at it from various angles. The usefulness for this research of an actor-oriented approach, interface analysis, organising practices and theory concerning the differences between policy and practice will be explored.

Chapter Two will elaborate the practice of baitfishing by artisanal fishermen for industrial tuna vessels. This will be done on two levels; first, after a contextual section on the district of Thiaroye, the practice itself will be explained and analysed; secondly, the impact of this practice on local dynamics and a campaign that was implemented by the authorities and Non Governmental Organisations (NGO’s) will be explored.

Chapter Three and Four will then focus on the *pêche au ramassage* in Saint Louis. Chapter Three will give an introduction in the origins and context of Saint Louis, thereby explaining why this particular form of cooperation only exists in Saint Louis. On the basis of the official contract between the artisanal and industrial fisheries in the *pêche au ramassage*, the different actors involved will be introduced and their positions and recurring actions in the preparation phase of the fishing voyages will be elaborated and explained. Chapter Four focuses on the way in which the *pêche au ramassage* is organised at sea and on the problems that exist on board. In both chapters the way in which the authorities handle this practice is set forth and analysed.

In Chapter Five I will get to the conclusion of this thesis. First, the findings of the fieldwork chapters of this thesis will be set forth. Secondly, the concepts as elaborated in the theoretical framework will be connected to the observed realities. Thirdly I will give several policy recommendations. Finally I will reflect on the shortcomings of this thesis.

The pictures that are referred to in the empirical chapters can be found on the pages that follow the concluding remarks of each chapter.

Senegal: some keyfigures for 2003 (source: Worldbank, 2005, Gret, 2000)



Surface: 197 000 km<sup>2</sup>

Population: 10.2 million

Capital Dakar: around 2 million

Annual population growth rate: 2.3 %

Annual urban growth rate: 4 %

Life expectancy at birth: 52.3 years

Infant mortality rate (per 1.000 live births): 78.0

Under 5 mortality rate (per 1.000 children): 137.0

GNI: 5.6 billion USD

GNI per capita: 540 USD against 500 USD in 1999

GDP annual growth rate: 6.5 %

Contribution to GDP (% of GDP):

- Agriculture: 16.8 %
- Industrie et mines: 21.2 %
- Services: 62 %

Inflation: 0.9 %.

Principal exportations (1996): fishery products, groundnuts (Gret, 2000)

Exportations of fishery products (1996) (% of total exportations): 30 % (Gret 2000)



### 3. Cooperation between artisanal and industrial fisheries; the *pêche au ramassage*

The next two chapters will concentrate on the social phenomenon of the so-called *pêche au ramassage*<sup>13</sup> in Saint Louis. This *pêche au ramassage* is an example of cooperation between Senegalese artisanal fisheries and foreign industrial fisheries. Entire artisanal fishery-units – one unit consists of a *pirogue* and five crewmembers – are put on board of an industrial freezer-trawler in order to fish in waters of countries other than Senegal. The Senegalese fishermen sell their catches to the shipowners of the *bateaux de ramassage*<sup>14</sup>, according to prices that are fixed in a contract. The trawlers are owned and exploited by Korean and Portuguese companies. This practice has been existing and evolving since twenty-five years.

This chapter will give insight in the complexities and dynamics of the preparation phase of the *pêche au ramassage*, in order to come to an understanding of this interaction between artisanal and industrial fisheries. The role and position of intermediaries, fishermen, shipowners' representatives and the state will be elaborated and analysed, by means of the official contract along which reality will be measured. However, before illustrating these roles and positions, I will describe the history of this practice and put it in its specific context.

#### 3.1 Origins and context of the *pêche au ramassage*

One can only get to a full understanding of a social phenomenon when one has insight to the historical and contextual backgrounds of this phenomenon. In this section I will try to reconstruct the events that have eventually led to the creation of a new type of fishery: the *pêche au ramassage*. The *couleur locale* will be painted as well, in order to find an explanation to the question why this phenomenon is only found in Saint Louis and, for as far as is known, nowhere else in the world.

##### 3.1.1 History of the *pêche au ramassage* in Saint Louis

Before going into the history of the *pêche au ramassage* shortly explain the basic events and people involved. Each *bateau de ramassage* is an industrial freezer-trawler, on which forty wooden *pirogues* are piled up in front of it. At the back of the vessel is a small building where the two hundred artisanal fishermen, who constitute the crews of the *pirogues*, eat, sleep and live. In addition, there is a Korean crew consisting of a captain, a commander, some sailors and two cooks. Furthermore, there is a crew of Senegalese sailors, who work on board of the vessel. They are assistants of the intermediary, a Senegalese person who intermediates between the fishermen and the Korean crew. To complete the picture, one will find a Senegalese observer on board as well.

All these people sail off to the waters of countries such as Guinea, Guinea Conakry, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Gabon and Angola. Once they arrive, the *pirogues* are discharged and the

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<sup>13</sup> *Pêche au ramassage* means something like 'assembled fishery', for a description look in section 3.1.1

<sup>14</sup> A *bateau de ramassage* is the industrial vessel from which the *pêche au ramassage* proceeds

fishermen will sail off to fish in the surroundings of the *bateau*. In the evening they return to the *bateau* and the catches of the day are transhipped from the *pirogues* to the *bateau*. The fish is weighed and registered and the Senegalese sailors will take care of the cleaning, packing and freezing. This goes on for about three months. After these three months the *bateau* returns to Saint Louis, where the *pirogues* and their crews are discharged. The *bateau* continues to the Canarian Islands to sell the fish. When all the fish is sold and the *bateau* is ready to leave, it returns to Saint Louis and the practice starts all over again. The *bateaux de ramassage* do not operate in Senegal, since transshipment of fish at sea is prohibited in the Senegalese waters. This is in short the practice of the *pêche au ramassage*.

With regard to the concepts, Sene (2004), one of the few if not the only scholar that has written about this practice, states that it is incorrect to use the term “*bateaux ramasseurs*”. He suggests another term, namely *ligne-marée*, for according to him this covers the artisanal fishermen that use the line to fish with (*ligne*), and the fact that they go out on a long fishing voyage (*marée*). I do not agree with him for various reasons. First of all, I think one has to stay close to the terms that are used by the people involved. When one would talk about the ‘*ligne-marée*’ in Saint Louis, one would not be understood. Secondly, since 2003 there have been two fishing voyages with a *bateau de ramassage* in the course of which fishermen used nets instead of lines. When following the argumentation of Sene, one should then speak of ‘*filet-marée*’ instead of ‘*ligne-marée*’, thus creating another term again which does not cover the entire practice. Thirdly, this practice comprehends more than just the fact that fishermen are fishing with either a line or a net and that they go on a long fishing voyage, as the next two chapters will show. For those reasons I will use the term *pêche au ramassage* when talking about the practice, and *bateau(x) de ramassage* when talking about the vessels themselves, whereby an ‘x’ is the plural form. These terms point at a practice so specific that I have chosen not to translate in English, for I find it will lose its meaning when trying to translate it. Moreover, this is the way in which the terms are used by the people involved.

Although there are hardly any written sources available concerning the origins of the *bateaux de ramassage*, I will attempt to reconstruct its history, based on interviews I have had with people involved and on two recently written documents. One is a working paper written by Abdoulaye Sene at the occasion of a symposium organised by the Observatory of Seafarers Rights of the University of Nantes in January 2004 (Sene, 2004). The other one is a report of a small study carried out on demand of the same Observatory by Youssoupha Gueye in 2002 (Gueye, 2002). Apart from a newspaper article (Le Soleil; Sene, 2003) those two documents are the only studies ever written about the *bateaux de ramassage*.

A logical beginning of a discussion about the origins of a practice is its year of birth. It is here where the difference of opinions starts; there is no consensus about when the *bateaux de ramassage* began. The written resources as well as the *chef de services des pêches* and the *chef du bureau des observateurs* state it was in the beginning of 1978 the first attempts to take along Senegalese artisanal fishermen and their *pirogues* on an industrial vessel were made. Fishermen I spoke with in Saint Louis all say it was around 1982, 1983 the first *bateau de ramassage* came to Saint Louis and recruited Saint Louisian fishermen to go on a fishing voyage. This difference in years could be explained by the way in which and the place where this practice started.

All people I spoke with agree on one thing; the *bateaux de ramassage* has its origins in Joal, a Senegalese village on the Petite Côte that knows a thriving fishing activity. However, the way in which it has started and who was involved is a point of discussion again. According to a fisherman in Saint Louis “it were the Spaniards that had a factory in Joal for *yaranka* and fish.

They saw they could also work with fishermen from Saint Louis. And after that, the Koreans came as well” (fieldnotes, 2004). One of the written resources states it like this:

In the beginning, it was a Senegalese businessman in collaboration with a Spanish vessel who started the operation. It was a matter of recruiting Senegalese fishermen to embark on board the vessel, so the fishermen would fish for the shipowner. The fishermen from Joal were approached the first. However, the moment the community started to reclaim taxes on the boats, the boats left and went to Kayar and Yoff to recruit fishermen over there. Those last ones soon found out the manner of acting on the boats and that this operation was abusing their labor force. It is after those setbacks that the boats went to Saint Louis, where they were given a warm welcome. (Gueye, 2002, p. 8)

The *capitaine du port*<sup>15</sup> of Saint Louis stated it slightly different: “There was a certain Nam in Joal, a Korean, who had brought a boat to Saint Louis and had made contact with a Saint Louisian and he asked him to take along his *pirogue* and the *pirogues* of some friends, to go fish in The Gambia, and so they did” (fieldnotes, 2003). In my opinion, it could be a combination of these stories that had happened: a Senegalese businessman who worked with Spanish people from the factory in Joal proposed to embark Senegalese fishermen and their *pirogues* on a Spanish vessel, and so they did. They tried to do this with fishermen from different villages in Senegal and finally ended up with the fishermen from Saint Louis. Perhaps the Korean businessman, called Nam, heard of this practice of the Spanish and he thought it was a good idea to try it himself. And so the first Korean vessel went to Saint Louis to recruit fishermen over there.

This explains as well the differences in years as mentioned above. The people and studies that refer to 1978 are pointing at the events that took place in Joal. People referring to 1982 and 1983 are pointing at the first time a *bateau the ramassage* came to Saint Louis. It thus might have taken four to five years to try-out this practice with fishermen from all kind of places in Senegal, before deciding to go and stay in Saint Louis. People often refer to this quest for the right fishermen, as does the *capitaine du port*: “The Koreans searched everywhere, but they could not find any better people than the Saint Louisians. They tried it with the *Lebou*<sup>16</sup> from Dakar, but these people had asked the boats to return to Dakar after 15 days already” (fieldnotes, 2004). Why did the Koreans find them in Saint Louis? What makes Saint Louisian fishermen different from other Senegalese fishermen? According to fishermen from other parts of the country, the *capitaine du port*, the Saint Louisian *chef de service des pêches*<sup>17</sup> and the Saint Louisian fishermen themselves, an answer to this question lies in their identity and character.

### 3.1.2 “*Les vrais pêcheurs sont ici, à Saint Louis.*”<sup>18</sup> Identity of Saint Louisian fishermen

This section provides an insight into the reasons that are put forward about and by Saint Louisian fishermen as to why Saint Louisian fishermen are different from other fishermen. Whether or not these differences are real is not of importance here, the concern of this section is to show the

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<sup>15</sup> port captain

<sup>16</sup> The fishermen from Dakar are called *Lebou*.

<sup>17</sup> head of fishery department

<sup>18</sup> “The real fishermen are here, in Saint Louis”, quote of a Saint Louisian fisherman (fieldnotes, 2004)

ideas, thoughts and discourse people have about themselves and the reason they think the Koreans have picked them to work with. The remarks that are made about and by Saint Louisian fishermen can be divided into three main points; their quality as fishermen, the conditions under which they are used to work and their mentality. The following quotation of the *capitaine du port* contains all three elements:

And you know, the *Guet Ndarien*<sup>19</sup> fishermen are the best in de world, they know the sea very, very well and they are completely at ease in their *pirogues*, they are resistant to cold and storms. And then there is the story about the catches, the Saint Louisians catch a lot of fish. The fishermen from *Ndar*<sup>20</sup> are a special kind of people. They have very warm blood. They are resistant, but also difficult to handle. It is not that they are savage, they would not hit you like that for nothing, no, you will have to provoke them before they do something. (fieldnotes, 2004)

In every statement the *capitaine du port* makes in this quotation, others support him. As far as the fishing skills of Saint Louisians is concerned, fishermen themselves stated:

The real fishermen are here, in Saint Louis. When we go out at sea on *marin*<sup>21</sup> it is me and my half brother who spot the fish. There are even *toubabs*<sup>22</sup> who ask us to find fish for them. (Saint Louisian fisherman, fieldnotes, 2004)

Spotting fish is one of the most important parts of fishing. The fisherman that is responsible for this normally stands straight in the front of the *pirogue* and is looking in the water for fish. I have assisted to this several times and was astonished every time I saw this, because most of the time the fishermen do not only see the fish, but they can also distinguish the type of fish while it is in the water. It is true that a 'great' fisherman is chosen for how well he can see and find fish in the water. Moreover, the above quoted fisherman stated "there are even *toubabs* who ask us to find fish for them". *Toubabs* are the ones that have industrial vessels and are believed to have all kinds of equipment on board to spot the fish. So if 'even' a *toubab* asks you where to find the fish, you must be a very good fisherman.

Fishermen also pointed at their special skills by comparing themselves to other fishermen, such as the *Lebou* in the Dakar region:

The Koreans have tried to work with the *Lebou* from Dakar, but they did not succeed. Those people wanted to return after one month already. And they stood up at 10 am and then returned at 11 am already to ask for food. And the fishermen from Saint Louis do not do that. Because they [the Koreans] know as well that the best fishermen are here [in Saint Louis], we work. We cannot return without having caught fish. (fieldnotes, 2004)

A man who had been a sailor on a *bateau de ramassage* dramatically formulated the fishing quality of Saint Louisian fishermen in the following way:

<sup>19</sup> Guet Ndar is the fishermen's district of Saint Louis

<sup>20</sup> Ndar is the Wolof name for Saint Louis

<sup>21</sup> the term artisanal fishermen use for a 15-day voyage on a *pirogue*

<sup>22</sup> *Toubab* means white man or woman in *Wolof*

Before there was a lot of fish in Gabon, where these [*bateaux de ramassage*] go fishing, but now there is not much left. Because you know, those *Guet Ndarien* fishermen, they are strong hey, with their lign fishing, they took all. In two years they took all, all the fish, they have emptied the sea. (ex-sailor on a *bateau de ramassage*, fieldnotes, 2004)

The *capitaine du port* stated that “the Saint Louisians support the cold and storms”, to point at harsh working conditions they seem to support. The *chef de service des pêches* stated it this way:

Personally I find this *pêche* [*au ramassage*] too hard. It is extremely difficult. They also tried it with the fishermen from Mbour and Dakar, but with those people it does not work. (fieldnotes, 2004)

Again the comparison is made with fishermen from other places of the country. As he continues he gives the reason why he thinks it does work with the Saint Louisian fishermen:

There are at least five thousand [Saint Louisian] fishermen who are fishing in Mauritania and are living in tents. They have difficulties to wash themselves and to drink enough. And it is also the Saint Louisians that do the *marins en pirogue*, then they stay on board of their *pirogue* for ten to fifteen days. (fieldnotes, 2004)

In other words, Saint Louisian fishermen are used to harsh fishing and living conditions, even when they do not board on a *bateau de ramassage*. That a state officer says this has a combined meaning however. He could have said this not only to explain why the *pêche au ramassage* does work with Saint Louisian fishermen and not with others, but to justify as well the little action of the state to do something about the working conditions on board of those *bateaux de ramassage*, as fishermen are used to those conditions anyway. The role of the state in this practice will be further elaborated in section 3.2.5, and the fishery in Mauritania and the *marin de pirogue* in section 3.1.3.

Finally, the *capitaine du port* said something that has to do with the mentality of the Saint Louisian fishermen. He would not say that they were savage, but he finds them difficult to handle and easily angered. People were often concerned about me when I told them I was doing research with Saint Louisian fishermen:

It must be hard for you. The *Guet Ndarians* are mad; if the only thing one knows is the sea one cannot have a good spirit. One becomes a fish oneself; they have the spirit of a fish. And they always fight as well. They are crazy. (fieldnotes, 2004)

Someone else stated:

The real *Guet Ndarians* are bastards. (fieldnotes, 2004)

Others found that fishermen do not understand certain things because of their lack of education, such as the ‘way in which the *bateaux* abuse them’. To sum up, the image of the fishermen’s mentality is one of little education, backwardness and aggressivity. Presuming this image matches with reality, this kind of attitude even seems logical when one has to work hard and under harsh and unclean conditions. Fortunately, I found that I could communicate quite normally with those ‘backward’ people, without getting attacked. When communicating with



them, the fishermen themselves showed me a part of their mentality that matches better with reality than the above stated ‘qualities’, namely their competitiveness at sea. The Koreans soon noticed this and turned the *pêche au ramassage* into some kind of competition. The *pirogue* that has fished the most at the end of the voyage receives a price and is honoured in front of all the others.

Everybody, everybody wants to be the winner of the fishing voyage. Each one of those forty *pirogues* wants to be the victor of the *bateau*. (Saint Louisian fisherman, fieldnotes)

I will come back at the meaning of this contest in chapter 4.

To conclude, three main points distinguish Saint Louisian fishermen from other Senegalese fishermen: they seem to work harder and more successfully, they are used to difficult working conditions and they like to win. One could consider a lot of what is said about and by Saint Louisian fishermen about those characteristics is discourse, but that does not make it any less important. Even when it is discourse, the fishermen still have a name to keep up high and have to live up to this discourse. This way discourse becomes reality and vice versa. With a similar discourse lacking in other fishing communities, it could have been that the Spanish and the Koreans who first came to Saint Louis have made use of this discourse to make people work. They surely did so in the case of the contest. In either way, whether it is discourse or not and whether it was really a reason for the Spanish and the Koreans or not to stay in Saint Louis, most important is that the fishermen themselves gave those characteristics as the most important reason the *bateaux de ramassage* stayed in Saint Louis and not elsewhere.

### 3.1.3 Context of Saint Louis

For the *bateaux de ramassage* the special characteristics of the Saint Louisian fishermen might have been a reason to stay in Saint Louis. But what could be the reasons for the fishermen themselves to go with these *bateaux de ramassage*? Part of the answer can be found in the context of Saint Louis. Section 3.2.3 will go into individual reasons of fishermen.

As stated in the introduction, overexploitation of the fishery resource is a world-wide problem that has affected Senegal as well. One only has to go and talk to old fishermen to know that not so long ago fish was more abundant in the Senegalese waters than it is today. Saint Louis is situated along the *Grande Côte*, the northern part of the Senegalese coast. The waters along this coast are known to be less abundant in fish than are the waters alongside the *Petite Côte*, the coastline south of Dakar (map 3.1 and picture 3.2). Not only did the resource become overexploited, the fishermen’s district of Saint Louis, *Guet Ndar* and *Gokhou Mbathie*, became overpopulated as well (see Table 3.1).

**Table 3.1 Population growth and density in Saint Louis**

District	Population 1988	Population 2002	Population growth %	Population density/km <sup>2</sup> '88	Population density/km <sup>2</sup> '02
GN + GM <sup>1</sup>	21.622	35.087	62,3	3740,8	6070,4
Saint Louis	113.843	179.585	57,7	1492,0 <sup>2</sup>	2337,8 <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Guet Ndar and Gokhou Mbathie<sup>2</sup> Calculated for Saint Louis minus Guet Ndar and Gokhou Mbathie

The population in these districts grew with 62,2 percent between 1988 and 2002 and its density was more than 2,5 times as high than in the rest of Saint Louis, with 6070,4 people per km<sup>2</sup> in 2002. This high density is due to the location of the fishermen's districts: these are situated on the second isle of Saint Louis and thus do not have space to expand. In the north is the border with Mauritania and in the south there are hotels that limit the space for expansion. With the rise of the fishermen's population and the declining fishing resources, it has become difficult for Saint Louisian fishermen to secure a livelihood that consists simply of fishing in the waters of their town. As a consequence fishermen have looked for other possibilities to find a livelihood, on the one hand by looking for other fishing grounds, on the other hand by looking for other jobs.

Searching other fishing grounds can be done in various ways. One can migrate temporarily to the South of Senegal and settle there for a while. One can go to Dakar and take departure on a *pirogue de marée* of a befriended fisherman, and stay at sea for about 15 days, sailing all the way to the Cape Verde Islands or Guinea-Bissau to fish. One can get a license to fish in Mauritania and make fishing voyages of two or three days to Mauritania. One can also migrate temporarily to Mauritania to live in special *campements de pêche*, which are controlled and regulated by the Mauritanian state. Another possibility is to go on a three months fishing voyage with one of the six *bateaux de ramassage* to fish in the waters of Guinea-Bissau, Guinea-Conakry, Sierra Leone, Liberia and all the way to Gabon and Angola. The fishermen I spoke with in Saint Louis have all tried these possibilities, most of the time combining them. For example, there was a fisherman who just came back from a fishing voyage with a *bateau de ramassage* and several days later was leaving for Dakar to go fishing with a *pirogue de marée* for 15 days. Looking for another job is a possibility as well, although one is not very likely to find one, when looking at the unemployment rates in Senegal, which were 48,1 percent in 2002 (ESAMII, 2001).

Even though fishing in Mauritania with a license is an option to find other fishing grounds, there are several risks attached to this. In 1989 a conflict occurred between Senegal and Mauritania. There had been a fight between cultivators and farmers along the river *Sénégal*, which constitutes the border between Mauritania and Senegal. In Mauritania an attack had occurred on Senegalese migrants living and working there, and as an answer the Senegalese started to attack Mauritanian shopkeepers. This caused the death of 150 to 200 people in Mauritania and 50 to 100 in Senegal, and hundreds of thousands refugees<sup>23</sup>. Ever since it has become difficult for Senegalese fishermen to fish in Mauritanian waters. In 2000 for example, the Mauritanian coastguard confiscated eight *pirogues* and their outboard motors that were fishing in Mauritanian waters. This event caused the rage of the whole fishing community of Saint Louis, being it the last straw. A Mauritanian truck full of fish was attacked when it crossed the border

<sup>23</sup> [http://www.stratisc.org/strat/strat\\_056\\_DARMAILL2.html](http://www.stratisc.org/strat/strat_056_DARMAILL2.html)

and the people decided to confiscate the fishing material of every Mauritanian fisherman entering the Senegalese zone (Sud Quotidien, 2000)<sup>24</sup>.

The family I lived with in Saint Louis has had several problems fishing in Mauritania as well. The oldest son of the household, Ali, told me about the experiences with the Mauritanian authorities he had had a few years ago. After a good day of fishing in Mauritania, the Mauritanian coastguard stopped Ali's *pirogue* and crew at sea, by firing a gun several times in the air. The coastguards asked him to show them his license, which he had with him. Unfortunately, they also checked the catches of the day and found that he had caught a few kilos of *thiof*<sup>25</sup> and hogfish, species he was not allowed to catch according to his license. The coastguard summoned the pirogue to follow them to Sam, a village in Mauritania, some 148 kilometres from Saint Louis. There they confiscated his *pirogue*, his outboard motor, all the fishing gear and the seven hundred kilos of fish he and his crew had caught.

Then they told me to leave empty handed, without taking anything with me, without food, without water. (...) We have walked for four days across the desert, on the fourth day we arrived in Saint Louis, but we had lost a lot of weight, and we were tired, broken. (...) Since that day I have not been at sea anymore. I do not want to anymore, and it has been almost two years since that has happened. (Ali, field notes)

After fifteen days of resting, he went back to Mauritania to pay a fine of five hundred thousand FCFA, (€ 763,00) and to fetch the *pirogue* and motor. His fishing gear and the catch of the day were never returned. One can say that it was his own fault to keep fish he was not allowed to catch, but in a fishermen's eye throwing back a *thiof* is like throwing away gold. Letting people walk 145 kilometres through the desert without any water or food is a punishment that, in my opinion, stands in no proportion to the 'crime' that was committed.

These kinds of problems can have a great impact on individual fishermen as one can see from the case of Ali, who is reluctant to go out fishing since what has happened. He is now taking care of the preparation of each fishing voyage his brothers make, makes sure everything is alright when they are at sea and sells the fish when they come back. In either way, the conflict with Mauritania does not make it any easier to fish over there. As some fishermen stated:

Look, here at the border with Mauritania there is a lot of fish, but the Mauritaniens attack us. If the Mauritaniens did not do that, then the *bateaux de ramassage* would not make such a lot of money, because we could stay here and fish here and not go with the boats at sea. (fieldnotes, 2004)

Fishermen themselves see the difficulties of fishing in Mauritania as a reason why the *bateaux de ramassage* can have such a success in Saint Louis. Summing up all the factors fishermen found important to underline when explaining this success one can say:

<sup>24</sup> For more documented conflicts between Senegalese fishermen and the Mauritanian coastguard see <http://members.lycos.co.uk/flamnet/informations.html>

<sup>25</sup> The English name for *thiof* is white grouper, but I will use *thiof* in the rest of my thesis, as it is seen as the richest specie in Senegal and forms an important part of Senegalese culture (see also De Vries 2003). This explains as well why the fisherman did not let the *thiof* go after catching it, as he stated himself, laughing: "one does not let a *thiof* swim away after catching it!"

We work with the *bateaux* because we do not have a choice, since the sea here is not abundant in fish. We should go to Mauritania to fish, but there we get caught, that is why we can only go with the Koreans, that is our only choice. (fieldnotes, 2004)

One can taste from these quotes that the *bateaux de ramassage* are not seen as the best option to choose for when searching somewhere to fish. The following section and chapter four will go further into why and how this form of interaction is not always seen in a positive way. As this section has shown, the problems of overexploitation, overpopulation and the simmering conflict with Mauritania created a local context within which the *bateaux de ramassage* can flourish. In addition, the identity of Saint Louisian fishermen contributes to this flourishing. This section on the origins and context of the *pêche au ramassage* is the framework in which one should place this practice. Almost as a symbol of the connectedness of Saint Louisian fisheries with these *bateaux de ramassage*, one can find *pirogues* named after one of the *bateaux de ramassage*, the *Praia de Buarcos*, on the beaches of Saint Louis (picture 3.3). The next section will focus on the analysis of the role and position of the different people involved, on the basis of the differences between the official contract and reality.

### 3.2 Preparing to leave: the contract

Since the beginning of the practice of the *pêche au ramassage* a contract has been signed between the different parties involved. In the contract they are called the shipowner, the fishermen's representative, the fishermen and the observer. The contract is only valuable if the local representatives of the Ministry of Fisheries and the *Marine Marchande*, respectively the *chef de service des pêches* and the *capitaine du port* of Saint Louis, have signed as well. By taking this contract as a point of departure I will describe and analyse the recurring events and actions that take place as the people involved prepare the voyage of a *bateau de ramassage*.

#### 3.2.1 The contract

In Saint Louis, the *capitaine du port* gave me the most ancient contract he could find in his archive, which dates from 1984. According to him it was the Minister of Fishery who had written the contract. Since the first *bateau de ramassage* came to Saint Louis the Minister had decided it would be a good idea to draw up a contract, and so he did (fieldnotes, 2004). So, since the very beginning of this practice, the state has involved itself in it. This is an important point to keep in mind, because it is part of an, again, ambiguous attitude of the state towards a social phenomenon that takes place, partly, within its borders. I will come back at this in section 3.2.5 of this chapter.

The contract is called: *contrat collectif entre armateur de navire de ramassage et pêcheurs artisans Sénégalais à bord*<sup>26</sup>. In the contract information is given about the shipowner or its representative, the fishermen's representative and the *bateau de ramassage*, such as the name, the flag, the port of registry and the carrying capacity. Furthermore, the obligations of the shipowner, the fisherman, the fishermen's representative and the observer are stipulated in the contract. Over the years, the contents and lay-out of the contract have changed, however. According to the *capitaine du port* those changes have been for the better, as he states that "the contract has been

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<sup>26</sup> collective contract between the shipowner of the *bateau de ramassage* and the artisanal fishermen on board

improved” (fieldnotes, 2004). He argued that the amounts of amends for fishermen were raised and the responsibilities of the fishermen’s representative were extended. Furthermore, he found the obligatory embarking of an observer on *bateaux de ramassage* an improvement as well (fieldnotes, 2004). Section 3.2.5 will go further in to what caused this obligation and what is done with it.

The way in which changes in the contract are made differs. The *capitaine du port* stated that when changes needed or need to be made, he calls for a meeting with the *Direction de la Pêche Maritime*, the *Marine Marchande* and the fishermen’s representatives. At this meeting they decide what needs to be changed and they stipulate the new formulations in the contract. However, the contract as it is there today is claimed to be designed by a fishermen’s representative. When doing his work he found that the contract and the list of the fishermen needed to change, and so he went to the *capitaine du port* and the *chef de service des pêches* with a new lay-out and set up of the contract. They approved of this new format and ever since people have been using this.

How to explain this way of operating? If the contract should represent a contract between the fishermen on the one hand and the shipowner who provides them with work on the other, then how can it be that a fishermen’s representative changes the contract? In other words, why are the fishermen’s representatives invited to these meetings and not the shipowners? When a contract is drawn up between an employer and his employee, it is normally not the employee that draws up the contract, is it? And what then is the role of the state, represented by the *capitaine du port* and the *chef de service des pêches*? When we take a closer look at the role and the position of the fishermen’s representative we might get a better understanding of why this is the way of operating.

### 3.2.2 The intermediaries

First of all, I will call the fishermen’s representatives differently, namely ‘intermediaries’. This is the way in which the intermediaries officially call themselves, because they feel they are the intermediary between the fishermen and the commanders of the *bateaux de ramassage*. It is also the way I think it is best to call them, but for other reasons. First of all I think they are individuals who literally are in-between more people and groups of people than just the fishermen and the commanders. The second reason has to do with the appellation ‘fishermen’s representatives’, which I found not to coincide with the reality of what these people are.

Who are those intermediaries then? Each *bateau de ramassage* has its own intermediary, so at the moment there are about six or seven of them. All the intermediaries originate from Saint Louis and they have all been fishermen before. Originally, the Spaniards, Portuguese or Koreans, depending on who was owning the *bateau de ramassage*, asked the intermediaries to find capable and suitable fishermen and their *pirogues* to go with the *bateaux* at sea. In the past, this meant searching fifteen *pirogues* with five men per *pirogue*, which makes a total of seventy-five fishermen. Nowadays, this means searching about forty *pirogues* and therefore around two hundred fishermen per *bateau*. The intermediary is the only one to decide who can come and who cannot. He is the one who makes up a list of fishermen that will take part in the voyage and no one else. Some of the intermediaries went with the first voyages ever made, and had been contacted directly by the owners of the vessels with the proposal to do this work. One of them

stated that the owners contacted him, because “maybe the *toubabs*<sup>27</sup> had heard my name, for I was known to be a hard worker and a great fisherman amongst fishermen” (field notes, 2004). Other intermediaries got their job by working on a *bateau de ramassage* as an assistant of the intermediary. When the commander of the *bateau* saw they were “working hard”, he asked them to become the intermediary of a new *bateau de ramassage*. Or, in some cases, they inherited the job of their father.

In the contract the intermediaries are called ‘fishermen’s representatives’. Over the years the tasks and obligations of the intermediaries have changed. The *capitaine du port* stated about these changes that “the obligations of the fishermen’s representative were too limited, his sole task was to search for *pirogues*, and so we have tried to improve his situation” (fieldnotes, 2004). Therefore they gave the intermediaries the responsibilities to watch over the compliance with the rules of the fishermen and the commanders at sea, and to consult every day with the observer about the fishing zones. One can imagine that these responsibilities have really “improved his situation”. Beside the already powerful position the intermediary has when choosing amongst fishermen the ones that can come and those who cannot, those additional responsibilities made sure he has a powerful position on board as well. Now he is in the position to control, not only the fishermen, but also the commanders and indirectly the observer. Moreover, the fact that the intermediaries apparently have succeeded in the “improvement of their situation” at the level of the local authorities and have got this improvement written in the contract, is something that shows a certain negotiation power as well. In fact, it has been a slow but successful negotiation, as one can see when taking a closer look at the changes that have been made in the contract over the years.

In the first contract which dates from 1984, the ‘fishermen’s representative’ is mentioned as a signing party, but there is not yet a sign of any obligations for him to fulfil. One and a half year later however, in 1985, he has three main points to take care of, which are:

- a) to produce a detailed report on the development of the voyage;
- b) to surpass any dispute that takes place between fishermen, sailors etc;
- c) to supervise all the operations of the weighing of the products and to produce a detailed list of individual captures.

Here one can see that a cautious beginning is made with the expansion of power of the ‘fishermen’s representative’, particularly by giving him the responsibility mentioned in point b). Here he does not yet have the task to control and solve problems, it is only mentioned that he has to surpass the problems that might occur. However, this is the germ from which those controlling and problem solving tasks have arisen. When looking at the changes that were made a year later, in 1986, one can see that those changes are in fact an elaboration of point b) in the previous contract, and moreover, that the contents of the previous points a) and c) have disappeared:

- a) to watch over the compliance of the fishermen with the engagements that are in the contents of the present contract;
- b) to maintain the discipline amongst the fishermen in view of the compliance with the engagements towards the Captain and the Shipowner.
- c) for any dispute which is not anticipated in this contract and which cannot be settled on board, to refer to the proper authorities.

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<sup>27</sup> Wolof: white men

Through these responsibilities the ‘fishermen’s representative’ becomes a real ‘fishermen’s ruler’, whereby he has to maintain the rules and order on board, and if he does not succeed, has to address to the authorities on land. The thing that strikes the most is that the text is specifically aimed at the maintenance of the obligations of the fishermen towards the shipowner and not the other way around. No one seems to control whether the shipowner or the captain is doing what he or she is supposed to do for the fishermen. With the last change with respect to the content of the contract, in 1997, this must have been noticed and thus changed. In the current contract the compliance with the rules of both the fishermen and the captain or the shipowner are mentioned to be a controlling task of the ‘fishermen’s representative’. I will elaborate on the way in which they carry out those tasks at sea in the next chapter.

As we have seen, the intermediaries have secured themselves a strong position. To come back at the *capitaine du port*, who stated that whenever changes have been or are to be made a meeting is held with the presence of the intermediaries, one can conclude that the intermediaries have played a role themselves in securing their position. Recently they have strengthened this position by constituting an official association of intermediaries, of which all the intermediaries are member. This way they can send a representative to meetings in Saint Louis or Dakar. However, it has not yet become quite clear why they are present at those meetings. This has to do with the second reason I gave for not naming the intermediaries ‘fishermen’s representatives’. Are they really fishermen’s representatives and if not, then what are they?

To answer this question I will use one of the very first contracts of the *pêche au ramassage*, dating from March the thirteenth 1984 (see Appendix III for a copy). Two names are mentioned on this *contrat d’engagement*<sup>28</sup> as it was called at the time, the first of the *representant du bateau*<sup>29</sup> and the second of the *representant des pêcheurs Sénégalais à bord du bateau*<sup>30</sup>. In this case, the first is Hwa-Kwon Lee, a Korean, and the second is Ousmane Gueye, a Senegalese. Now it is the following sentence which is the most revealing:

*Je Soussigné, Monsieur Hwa-Kwon Lee, Capitaine du bateau Heung Yang No 9 représenté par Ousmane Gueye certifie avoir engagé ce présent contrat avec les pêcheurs dont les noms suivent (voir en annexe) dans les conditions suivantes: (...)*<sup>31</sup>

It could be that a mistake was made while drawing up this contract, but then it is still a very striking one. Here one can see in black and white the real position of the intermediary, which is not to be a representative of the fishermen, but the representative of the shipowner and the captain. It is literally stated in this sentence that Ousmane Gueye, who is called fishermen’s representative on the same page, is representing the captain of the boat, mister Lee.

In fact this is not very surprising, as history shows that the intermediaries have been recruited directly or indirectly by the shipowners, to, on their turn, recruit artisanal fishermen for the shipowners. If they were to be representatives of the fishermen, they had to be chosen by fishermen themselves amongst fishermen. As an ex-sailor of a *bateau de ramassage* stated: “The intermediary is not the representative of the fishermen, he belongs in essence to the employer, he

<sup>28</sup> contract of commitment

<sup>29</sup> representative of the boat

<sup>30</sup> representative of the Senegalese fishermen on board of the boat

<sup>31</sup> I, the undersigned, mister Hwa-Kwon Lee, Captain of the boat Heung Yang No 9, represented by Ousmane Gueye, guarantee to have engaged in this present contract with the fishermen whose names will follow (see annex) under the following conditions: (...)

defends the interests of the employer, he is recruited by the employer” (fieldnotes, 2004). The local government as well as the authorities in Dakar know this, which is, again, not surprising, for the *capitaine du port* and the *chef de services des pêches* both have been occupying the same post since respectively 1984 and 1989. This appears from the following quote as well:

And there is the intermediary who works with the shipowner and his role is crucial. It is he who recruits the forty *pirogues*, it is he who searches for people who are disciplined enough and will not create any problems; he plays an essential role in the choice of the people that go at sea. And we, at state level, we do not interfere in this. (fieldnotes, 2004)

At the national level statesmen are aware of this as well, as a high officer of the *Direction de la Protection et Surveillance des Pêches* (DPSP) told me: “The representative works for the account of the shipowner and not for the account of the fishermen” (fieldnotes, 2004). Even in the contract itself it has been stipulated from 1987 until 1989 that the shipowner is obliged to discuss any change of ‘fishermen’s representatives’ with the local authorities. This does not only make clear once again that it is the shipowner to whom the ‘fishermen’s representatives’ belong, but it emphasises once more the powerful position of these people. When a shipowner has to discuss with the local authorities before he can change his own representative, this means that those representatives are to some extent protected by the authorities. The role of the state with regard to the intermediary will be come back at in section 3.2.5.

Now it has become clear why the ‘fishermen’s representatives’ are invited to the meetings. They are in fact representing the shipowner, who is absent most of the time, and in that way they have the right to participate in such a meeting. They are not employees of an employer who draw up their own contract, but they are representatives of the employer and thus have a say in the formulation of the contract. However, starting from the fishermen’s perspective, this way of working is quite strange. If the fishermen are not represented by the ‘fishermen’s representative’, then how is it possible that a contract is signed? In fact, the contract is not signed between two different parties, but by one single party, and in either way the fishermen are not involved. The only thing that is done is that a list of the fishermen who are to leave with the *bateaux de ramassage* is attached to the contract. A true representation of their interests and needs does not exist however. The fishermen do not sign the contract, and they often do not even know what the contents of the contract are. The contract, which is now called “*contrat collectif entre armateur de navire de ramassage et pêcheurs artisans Sénégalais à bord*”<sup>32</sup> is in fact not what it says to be. It is not a contract between the shipowner and the artisanal fishermen, but a contract between the shipowner and its representative.

Consequently, fishermen do not have direct contact with the *capitaine du port*, the *chef de service des pêches* or shipowners. Even though the intermediary is not a real fishermen’s representative, it is with him that fishermen have the only direct contact. This contact occurs when the intermediary is searching the ‘right’ fishermen for the next voyage. When he has made its choice, he assembles all the captains of the *pirogues* to a preparatory meeting. This meeting is crucial for the communication of what is in the contract to the fishermen. The next section will go deeper into this meeting (3.2.3). The *bateau de ramassage* usually will sail off within a week from the meeting. Another preparation the intermediary makes before the *bateau de ramassage*

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<sup>32</sup> “collectif contract between the shipowner of the *bateau de ramassage* and the Senegalese artisanal fishermen on board”



can leave, is to search for a crew of Senegalese sailors, who will be his personal assistants and who constitute a supplement to the Korean or Portuguese sailor crew. These people are originating from the fishermen's districts in Saint Louis as well and they are often acquainted to the intermediary, through family or friendly relations. An ex-sailor gave the intermediary yet another appellation, namely "black shipowner". As soon as the *bateau de ramassage* has arrived and lies at anchor before the coast of Saint Louis, the intermediary and his sailor crew go on board every day to make preparations, such as the charging of the *pirogues*. Usually the preparations take a week to ten days, and when the contract is signed and every fishermen, sailor, *pirogue* and luggage is on board, the *bateau* sails off and heads for Dakar, where an observer is to embark.

### 3.2.3 The fishermen

Without fishermen the *pêche au ramassage* would not exist; they are the ones that will have to catch the fish and in that way assure the yield of each voyage. As I have stated before, there are currently around two hundred fishermen who embark on each *bateau de ramassage*; this means an overall of twelve to sixteen hundred fishermen who are involved in this practice, depending on the amount of *bateaux*, which fluctuates between the six and eight. A conservative estimate of the people who depend on the fishermen, say two persons per fisherman, makes a total of 4800 people who depend on this practice, including the fishermen themselves<sup>33</sup>. This is 13,7 percent of the total population of 35.087 people living in fishermen's districts Guet Ndar and Gokhou Mbatie. I even think this percentage to be higher, as there are normally more people depending on one fisherman than just two. Calculation on the basis of the number of *pirogues* that are involved in the *pêche au ramassage* shows a higher percentage; the total of 320 *pirogues* that are involved make up nineteen percent of the 1670 *pirogues* in the Region of Saint Louis<sup>34</sup>.

The amount of *bateaux* and fishermen per *bateau* have not always been the same. According to the *chef de services des pêches*, there were about four *bateaux* in 1986, in 1995 this has increased to become ten, an increase that could have a link with the Mauritanian conflict in 1989, and nowadays it is between the six and eight. Formerly, each *bateau* took about fifteen to twenty *pirogues*, and stayed at sea for forty-five days. At a certain time this rose up till fifty-five *pirogues* per *bateau*, which makes a total of 275 fishermen on board. This went too far for the authorities and the maximum amount of *pirogues* has been fixed at forty since 2002, on the basis of a meeting that was held at the *Service Regional des Pêches et de la Surveillance* of Saint Louis<sup>35</sup>.

From 1985 until at least 1991<sup>36</sup> the fishermen had three obligations to comply with, which were stipulated in the contract:

- a) to respect the work and the Superiors on board;

<sup>33</sup> Eight *bateaux* times two hundred fishermen per *bateau* is 1600. Three times 1600 is 4800.

<sup>34</sup> Total of *pirogues* in the Region of Saint Louis counted by the DPM (2000).

<sup>35</sup> Ministère de la Pêche (2002). *Compte rendu de réunion relative à la sécurité à bord des bateaux de ramassage*, N° 004 SRPS/SI 2002. Saint Louis: Service Regional des Pêches et de la Surveillance de Saint Louis.

<sup>36</sup> The next contract I have dates from 1999, which differs from the contract in 1991. I do not have any contracts from the period in between, the *capitaine du port* just gave me the contracts that had been changed in comparison with the previous, so it could be that the quoted obligations dured until 1999. Unfortunately, I cannot prove this by showing the contracts.

- b) to address oneself exclusively to the representative of the Senegalese fishermen for any inquiries or problems occurring board;
- c) to abstain from taking any material, product or accessory belonging to the vessel;

These obligations were the first ones ever for the artisanal fishermen to be drawn up in the contract. As one can see, fishing was not one of the obligations of the fishermen. “To respect the work (...) on board” might point in that direction, but this is such a vague formulation that it might as well point to the way in which the work is organised on board. Instead of obligations that refer to the fishermen’s job and the way in which this job has to proceed, it seems that all the obligations refer to the position of the fishermen in relation to others. They have to respect their Superiors, with a capital ‘s’, they can only address themselves to the ‘fishermen’s representative’ in times of trouble and they cannot take anything that belongs to the ship. For at least seven years these were the obligations of the fishermen, which were to be supervised by the intermediary on their observance.

On the basis of the earlier mentioned meeting of different parties involved in this practice in 2002, the contract has been changed, particularly the section on the fishermen’s obligations. Point a) and c) of the previous contract have been transmitted to the present contract, point b) has not. Together with those two, nine other obligations have been added. One of these obligations is the wearing of a life jacket which is a controversial theme within the fisheries sector in Senegal. The government would like to see every fisherman wearing a life jacket when going out at sea, but fishermen feel that “real fishermen do not wear life jackets” and thus are reluctant to wear them. On the *bateaux de ramassage* there have been mortal accidents in the past with people not knowing how to swim embarking on board and falling off. This caused the authorities to oblige fishermen to wear a life jacket. However not every *bateau de ramassage* has enough jackets for everyone and in observation reports is stated that fishermen refuse to wear them. Because of several diseases that have struck fishermen while at sea with the *bateau de ramassage*, it is now obligatory to vaccinate oneself against certain diseases. This is paid for by the shipowners. Since 2002 it is forbidden to take boys along who are younger than sixteen and this is why an identity card is obligatory, for one cannot have one before this age. Next to an identity card, fishermen need to have an ‘*attestation maritime*’, a set of papers to control the vitality and ability to swim. Finally, the fishermen have to ask the observer every day if they are allowed to fish in the waters the commander have told them to fish. This obligation has been added since a problem has occurred that is referred to by the people involved as “Angola”, and which will be explained in section 3.2.5.

To sum up, the newly added obligations show an attempt to regulate and improve the situation of the fishermen on board, although those attempts do not go very far. The improvements have, to a certain extent, to do with the fishermen’s security, health and registration, more than with their position or working conditions. As will become clear in the following chapter of this thesis, it is exactly those latter issues that need more improvement and regulation. Moreover, it is still not mentioned in the contract that fishing is an obligation of the fishermen. It could be that the people involved in drawing up the contract thought it was so obvious that the fishermen would fish, that they did not even think about stipulating it in the contract. It could be because of the conditions on which the fishermen are paid as well, namely by the kilo fish they catch. Consequently, if they do not fish, they are not paid. So the time they are sailing to Gabon for example, a voyage that can take seven to eight days, the fishermen do not make any money. However, even without a plain stipulation in the contract, they are clearly

obliged to fish, as the next explanation of a fisherman about the preparatory meeting with the intermediary shows:

Before we leave we have a departure meeting. The *dirigeant* then calls all the captains of the pirogues with him. The number of *pirogues* that can come is limited, there are forty *pirogues*, so there will be forty captains, and there are five persons for each *pirogue*. Little children that do not have a national identity card cannot come to the voyage, but the children of fourteen, fifteen years will come anyway<sup>37</sup>. And when the captains are all there, the *dirigeant* says: “We are going on a voyage of eighty days, there will be one resting day”. When we have been fishing for fifty or forty days then there will be a resting day, but it is he who decides when there is a resting day. (fieldnotes, 2004)

If it is the intermediary that decides when the resting day will be, then logically he decides as well when the fishing days will be. Normally the fishermen work seven days a week when doing the *pêche au ramassage*, and their working hours are from 05:00 am till at least 19:00 p.m. The seven or eight days of sailing to the country of destination do not count within the eighty days, in other words, those eighty days are eighty days of almost non-stop fishing, with the understanding that the fishermen get one day off.

In the above quotation the fisherman uses the word *dirigeant* to point at the intermediary, yet another appellation for this actor. *Dirigeant* means literally ‘the one that has the power’ when translated in Dutch (*machthebber*, Maas et.al., 1996). Translated in English it would be ‘ruler’ or ‘leader’. I heard this for the first time when I was asking the fisherman I spoke with to tell me about the intermediary. In his answer he tried to stick to my formulation and thus to use the word ‘intermediary’ as well, something I did not know until he asked me: “Can I use the word *dirigeant* for the intermediary, because I am not used to calling him that way, for on board he is our *dirigeant*, you know”. One can imagine the amazement that I felt, not only for his very kind attempt to letting me understand what he was saying by using my words, and that methodologically seen, this has to be the other way around, but also amazement for the way in which he called the intermediary. If this man was to be simultaneously their *dirigeant* and the intermediary, then what is his position in fact? At that time I had not even heard about the other ways in which he is called, and in this chapter there are still more names to come. It is clear that the way in which the intermediary behaves towards the captains of the *pirogues* in the above quotation, fits the description of the intermediary as a *dirigeant*.

In addition, it is clear that information from the contract is transmitted to the captains of the *pirogues* through this preparatory meeting, such as the limited amount of *pirogues*, the obligation to have an identity card and the minimum age of participants. Furthermore, the same fisherman continued to state that if the captains take the identity cards of the crewmembers with them to the meeting, the intermediary gives them an advance of one hundred thousand CFA (€ 152,67) to make some preparations. Now, to come back at the contract, it is indeed an obligation of fishermen to deposit their identity card with the intermediary, so that he can draw up a list of all the participating fishermen, which is attached to the contract. In other words, the identity cards could be considered as the signatures of the fishermen on the contract. However, in the contract there is no mention of any condition about receiving or not receiving an advance. Apparently, this

<sup>37</sup> It is possible to take along boys of less than sixteen years by, for example, giving a date of birth on the identity card that is just a few years earlier than the real date of birth, if one knows his date of birth at all. It is difficult to check this, as a result of an often non-registration of newly born children

advance is needed as a means to push people to bring along their identity cards. Instead of making clear to fishermen why this card is needed, it seems as if it now serves as a pledge for the advance.

This meeting seems to be the only moment that fishermen are told what is in the contract and is thus crucial in the transfer of information. Yet it is the intermediary who is the instrument of the information transfer and, as set forth in the previous section, he is working for the shipowner and not for the fishermen. One can conclude from the remarks made by a well-informed fisherman<sup>38</sup> that this information transfer is in fact not occurring without leaving any gaps:

At the level of the *capitainerie du port* there is a contract *bien légale*, written by the state itself. But these people [the intermediaries] they play with the naivety of fishermen. Because the fishermen do not even know that there exists a contract, they do not go and look what is in it. Boly [an intermediary] just invites them at his house and discusses with them about the price they get for the fish before they leave. (fieldnotes, 2004)

This man is the only fisherman I heard talking about the contract in Saint Louis.

Whether fishermen are really not abreast of the contract or its contents I do not know. It is hard to imagine that this is the case however, when taking into account the long history of this contract. Even so, not one of the fishermen I spoke with had a contract in his possession and not one of them referred to this contract as something they could fall back on in times of trouble. Fishermen talked about its contents, but without referring to the contract itself. They said, for example, that the prices of the fish were fixed, but without stating where they were fixed. They did refer to the *capitaine du port* as an important individual who can decide about the prices, but again without mentioning the contract. This apparent lack of knowledge of fishermen about the contract and its contents shows that this contract does indeed not merit the name “contract between the shipowner and the Senegalese artisanal fishermen on board”. In fact, the arrangements that are made between the intermediary and the fishermen during the preparatory meeting should be considered as the real contract, instead of the contract itself. Obligations originating from the contract enter those arrangements, but are often interpreted in another way or occur under other conditions than meant in the contract, as is the case with the identity cards and the advance.

Furthermore, there are also things that are arranged that, apparently, are not found in the contract. This is the case with the prices the fishermen get for their catches. In the contract there are two different categories of fish: ‘AFRICA’ and ‘EUROPE’. The first is said to be destined to the African markets, the latter to the European and Asian markets and consists of the most valuable species. There is no mention however of which species belongs to what category. The prices of AFRICA and EUROPE are fixed at respectively 200 FCFA (€ 0,31) and 375 FCFA (€ 0,57)<sup>39</sup> per kilogram. Now, some intermediaries make the agreement with the captains of the *pirogues* that if they catch species that do not belong to AFRICA or to EUROPE, those species will be bought as well, but for a price which fluctuates around the 120 to 150 FCFA (€ 0,18 - € 0,23). This ‘special’ category is called ‘TS’, ‘AFRICA BURO’ or ‘AFRICA LOCAL’ and does not figure in the contract.

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<sup>38</sup> He is well informed as a result of an attempt he has done to take steps against the intermediary for something the intermediary had done at sea that he felt was unjust. Therefore he has been to different local authorities and thus got in touch with the contract.

<sup>39</sup> To compare, a kilogramme of *thiof*, which is classified as ‘Europe’ in the contract, will yield at least ten times as much on the local market and exporting companies will pay between the 4000 and 6500 CFA by the kilo.

That it is not mentioned in the contract does not make it any less real, on the contrary. The fishermen I spoke with did not make any difference between the categories that were in the contract and the latter that were not. It is just the third category of fish. Which species belong to which category differs by the voyage and by the intermediary, and is concluded at the meeting. However, the verbal agreement about this category and its price is not always transmitted to the fishermen that eventually go with the *bateau de ramassage*. This is, because the captains of the *pirogues* are invited, and not the fishermen themselves. It happens quite often that the captain does not even board himself on the *bateau*. This has already created several problems at sea, one of which will be elaborated in section 4.4 of the next chapter.

The captains have another role in this as well. The intermediary does not always know every fisherman that embarks on the *bateau de ramassage*, it is often just the captain of the *pirogue* who he knows. And thus the captains or the heads of family decide how the crew will be assembled. Moreover, a captain of a *pirogue* is often, but not always, the owner of the *pirogue*. When the intermediary makes his choice, he chooses not only amongst fishermen, but amongst *pirogues* as well, for some *pirogues* are not in very great shape and cannot go on a three months voyage. More important is that at the end of the voyage the fishermen divide the money they made between the crew, the *pirogue* and the outboard motor. The shares of those latter two are destined to their owner. In this way, anyone who owns a *pirogue* and motor can gain money without going at sea, by letting other people, such as family members, go with their equipment. One can imagine that this constitutes a lucrative option for heads of families. They can send their sons and equipment on a three months voyage, during which they have several mouths less to feed, and when their sons return they have made money for themselves and for their fathers. As my friend and interpret stated when we were talking about a long conversation we had had with an intermediary:

So it is better to be good friends with the intermediary. They have a certain power, people give them power. They are even respected, they are respected a lot in the *quartier*<sup>40</sup>. (fieldnotes, 2004)

For fishermen there are some advantages as well to go with the *bateaux de ramassage*. One could say it is the route of the least risks to go with them. Every time a *pirogue* sails off to Mauritania it takes the risk of being caught by the Mauritanian coastguard. Every time a *pirogue* sails off in the waters of Saint Louis it has to have invested before in fuel and bait, and risks to return without having caught enough fish to even cover the investments. The same accounts for temporarily migration to other fishing zones in Senegal. When one goes with a *bateau de ramassage*, one does not need to invest in fuel, bait, food and water and one is insured for accidents or loss of *pirogues*. The only thing one has to invest in is one's own labor force and equipment, plus some extras such as sugar, ataya<sup>41</sup>, couscous and peanuts. This is also the reason everyone involved gives for the low price the fishermen get for the fish, as a shipowner's representative<sup>42</sup> stated:

We give them food, fuel, ice, bait, medical care, a shelter and we pay for the fishing license. We give them all this for free, this is all for free you know. (fieldnotes, 2004)

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<sup>40</sup> district

<sup>41</sup> senegalese black tea

<sup>42</sup> see section 3.2.4 for more explanation about the shipowners representatives

This discourse, that it is “all for free”, has found its way to the authorities and the fishermen as well, but it is not true however. The fishermen do not get all this for free, they pay for it by means of the price they get for the fish, which is ten to twenty times as less as on the local markets. It is not clear however how much money the shipowners make with this practice, so whether it is in fact a fair price the fishermen get is difficult to say. I will go into this question in section 4.3 of the next chapter.

Next to the low risk factor, there is another advantage fishermen gave as a reason to go with the *bateau de ramassage*. At the end of the voyage they get paid, and most of the time this is a big amount of money at once, this can be around the 250.000 FCFA (€ 381,78). With a regular fishing day one will not get such an amount at once, what makes it difficult to purchase bigger things or to save some money. Moreover, when one is away for three months from family, it is impossible to spend money on them, whereas when one returns each day, one will spend this money more easily: “You cannot watch you family suffer without giving them some money. When you go with the *bateau*, you can save your money, that is the difference” (fieldnotes, 2004). So the amount of money fishermen get at once is something which is felt as a great advantage, as in fact it constitutes a way of saving money.

Once the preparatory meeting is finished the fishermen start preparing their voyage. One man said: “And from the day of the reunion till the day of departure *c’est la fatigue qui commence déjà*”<sup>43</sup>. One can see the *bateaux* lying for anchor at one hundred meters from the beach and *pirogues* going back and forth between the beach and the *bateaux*, bringing nets or lines, other fishing gear, iceboxes, gas and luggage of the crewmembers to the *bateaux* (pictures 3.4 and 3.5). On the last few days the *pirogues* are charged on board and the day of departure the fishermen are brought to the *bateaux* by friends. There is one thing one should not forget to do:

Before they go on board, you see people do their *debadep* and their *xaarfoufa*. Those are sacrifices. And sometimes you hear someone screaming: “The first belongs to me!” That means he wants to be the number one of the voyage with regard to the catches.

There are many ways of doing one’s *debadep* or *xaarfoufa*, on which I will not elaborate here, but most important is that this is the last thing fishermen do in the phase of preparations, to assure themselves of a good and safe fishing journey.

### 3.2.4 The shipowners and their representatives

The title of this section might raise a question about the representatives of the shipowners, as in the previous sections of this chapter it has turned out that the shipowners already have their representative, in the shape of the intermediary. They have another representative however, their ‘official’ representatives of whom three are based in Dakar and two in Saint Louis. In the past, the shipowners themselves came to Senegal to arrange everything before the departure of the ship, but they soon found that it would be easier to give this job to Senegalese people. This was particularly due to the language and knowledge about the ways things work in Senegal. As a consequence, the shipowners themselves are quite invisible in Saint Louis. They are referred to by the local authorities and the fishermen as ‘the Koreans’ or ‘the *toubabs*’<sup>44</sup> and they sometimes

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<sup>43</sup> “the tiredness already begins”

<sup>44</sup> white men

come to Senegal, when there are problems to be solved or to visit their representatives and intermediaries.

In each contract that is signed the names of the shipowner and/or the captain of the ship and the representative are given. The Korean shipowners are all based in Las Palmas on the Canary Islands. This is where the *bateaux de ramassage* go to as well when they return from a fishing voyage for the discharging of the fish. There is no consistence in the nationality and the identity amongst the shipowner and his *bateau de ramassage*. In a contract dating from 1999 one can see that the shipowner has the Korean nationality, but lives in Las Palmas, Spain. His *bateau* has a Belizian flag, but has Las Palmas as home-port. This *bateau* will fish with Senegalese fishermen in the waters of Gabon. Now, who is responsible? Under the laws of which state does this *bateau de ramassage* and its activities fall? There is no clear answer to these questions, and one can even conclude that there is no reflection on these questions by anyone involved.

Unfortunately I did not succeed in finding shipowners, but I did talk to their representatives in Dakar and Saint Louis. These representatives all got their jobs by chance or through relations with friends or family. One of them was on the right place at the right time, as she was asked to translate between the Korean and the receptionist of the hotel where they wanted to stay. Her knowledge of the English language turned out to become the starting point of her career as representative of a *bateau de ramassage*, as several months later the Koreans asked her to become their financial secretary. After gaining their confidence, the Koreans finally left their *bateau de ramassage* to her. Another representative is a beautiful example of the closeness of the intermediary to the shipowners, as she is married to the intermediary of one of the *bateaux* she is representing.

There is a difference between being an intermediary and being a shipowner's representative however, as their levels of representation are different. The intermediaries take care of the fishermen, the *pirogues*, the catches and they have to make sure everything goes alright at sea. The shipowner's representatives have to take care of the preparation of the *bateau* before it can leave and have to make the necessary arrangements on an administrative level. They are the ones that usually sign the contract in name of the shipowners and they have to make sure there is a fishing license for the country where they are going to fish. In addition, they take care of vaccinating the fishermen, of arranging the insurances, of purchasing the bait in Joal, of buying the stock of food and fuel, of letting the *bateau* being checked by the police, the hygiene service, the immigration service and the customs in the harbour of Dakar, of arranging the embarking of an observer and of giving money to the intermediaries for the advance they give to the fishermen. For the entrance to the harbour in Dakar a *consignataire*<sup>45</sup> has to be arranged, for a foreign ship can only enter the harbour by means of a *consignataire*.

In short, the shipowner's representatives are occupied with the financial and administrative arrangements around the *bateau* in Senegal, and the intermediaries are occupied with the fishermen and the situation at sea. There is just one of the shipowner's representatives who does have contact with the fishermen, as he is partially an intermediary as well. The other shipowner's representatives do not know the fishermen and they do not have any contact with them. One of them stated that "it is the task of the *controleurs*<sup>46</sup> to have the contact with the fishermen". 'Controleurs' is yet another way in which the intermediaries are called. A shipowner's representative stated:

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<sup>45</sup> consigner

<sup>46</sup> controller, inspector

*Ce sont eu qui sont le patron des pêcheurs, les controleurs des pêcheurs*<sup>47</sup>. (fieldnotes, 2004)

'Patron' means 'captain' as well as 'employer' and 'boss', and '*controleur*' means 'controller' and 'inspector' (Maas, 1996, Van Dale, 2003). This quote is striking, because it reveals exactly the positions the intermediary has towards the fishermen on the one hand and the shipowner's representatives on the other hand. He is a captain and an employer for the fishermen, and towards the shipowner's representative he is a controller and inspector of the fishermen, as he is there to make sure they do their job and do not create any problems.

The shipowners have always had the longest list of obligations in the contract. Over the years all the obligations that were in the first contract have remained more or less the same, these were the obligations to transport the fishermen and their equipment, to give them food and shelter on board, to give them fuel, to assure the reparations of the outboard motors, to compensate if a *pirogue* or motor is lost and to pay the fishermen according to the prices fixed in the contract. Although these obligations stayed the same, several others have been added and some stripped again from the contract. The obligations that have been added are the medical treatment of fishermen on board with the embarking of a male nurse and the assurance of taking good care of the observer who has to embark since 1999 on the *bateaux de ramassage*. This last one has been added due to complaints of observers about their position and conditions on board<sup>48</sup>. The discharge of one third of the catches in Saint Louis and the purchasing of the bait in either Saint Louis, Joal, Yarakh or Mbour, were obligations as well, but they have been removed from the contract. In the current contract it is just mentioned that it is the shipowner who has to furnish the bait to the fishermen.

One of the most interesting things that can be seen in the changes that have been made in the contract over the years, is the development of the price categories of fish. These categories have always had their place amongst the obligations of the shipowners in the contract. Since 1990 there are two categories, namely 'Africa' and 'Europe'. It is only in the first contract that there were two category as well, which were called 'big fish' and 'small fish' at the time. During six years however, from 1985 till 1991, there were three categories in the contract, 'big fish', 'small fish' and 'or everything', of which only 'or everything' was used. This third category has created a starting point from which other categories have been invented. In the official contract there are two categories since fourteen years, but the possibility of a third category has not been crossed out in the minds of the people involved in this practice, as we have seen in section 3.2.3. Intermediaries and fishermen still conclude third categories like TS or AFRICA BURO. When one does not take into account the history of how the categories came into existence however, one cannot understand that there is in fact a third 'underground' category. As an observer stated in his observation report:

(...) in the contract it is clearly stipulated that there are two price categories of fish per kilogram, namely: EUROPE and AFRICA. However, on board this is not the case, because a third category has been created (TS), fixed at a price of 120 FCFA per kilogram (...) (DPSP, 2004)

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<sup>47</sup> "They are the *patron* of the fishermen, the *controleurs* of the fishermen."

<sup>48</sup> more explanation about the observers in section 3.2.4 and chapter four.



He clearly takes the contract as point of departure for his analysis of the problem that has occurred due to this third category. He could have understood the problem better however, if he had knew about the origins of this categories and the way in which those categories are fixed.

Moreover, one can conclude from this example, that things that were formerly stipulated in the contract, can still continue to live on in the actions of people, even when they are not stipulated anymore. Another example of this is the instruction of the locations where the shipowners were to buy their bait, in particular Joal, which is not mentioned anymore, while Joal continues to be the place where the *bateaux* purchase their bait. Another important point is that apparently it is the intermediary who fixes the categories and the prices with the fishermen and not the shipowners or their representatives. The intermediary might get the order from the shipowners or the representatives to fix certain categories for a certain price, but it is only the intermediary who has contact with the fishermen.

### 3.2.5 The state and the observers

In the beginning of this section (3.2.1) I stated that it was important to keep in mind that the state has involved itself in the practice of the *pêche au ramassage* since its very beginning. This early involvement consisted of the drawing up of the contract and of making it compulsory for the parties concerned to sign it. I also stated that this involvement is part of an ambiguous attitude of the state towards the practice of the *pêche au ramassage*. I will show this attitude by analysing the way in which the state acts on a local and on a national level towards the contract. Over the last twenty years the contract has been changed several times and in various ways, as the previous subsections have shown. One of the most recent and radical changes is the entrance of a new obligatory player in the contract, namely the observer. The entrance of the observer in the contract and thus in the practice of the *pêche de ramassage* makes up a new phase in the involvement of the state in this practice. This new phase forms an interesting tool of analysis of the state's attitude.

It is only since 1999 that each *bateau de ramassage* is obliged to take a Senegalese observer on board. Before that year the Senegalese authorities have always put their visa on the contract and have been involved in the adjustments of the contract, but there had never been a representative of the state on board of a *bateau de ramassage*, let alone during an entire voyage. What exactly has occurred that this has changed? Section 3.2.3 shortly mentions the event which is popularly called “the problem of Angola”. Gueye (2002: 18) summarises this problem as follows:

In fact, more than five hundred fishermen, one hundred motorised *pirogues* and hundreds of tonnes of fish were detained in the course of November 1998. The reason of these arrests was the violation of the prohibition to fish in the Angolese maritime waters by the Korean *bateaux*.

The two *bateaux de ramassage* both had a valid fishing license for the waters of Gabon. During the voyage however, they found that fish was more abundant in the south and they thus went fishing illegally in the waters of Congo and finally in the waters of Angola as well. A Portuguese trawler that was fishing in the same waters, noticed this and reported the presence of the two *bateaux de ramassage* to the Angolese authorities. The fishermen, their equipment, catches and the two *bateaux de ramassage* were arrested in Angola and were detained there for at least nine

days. On the ninth day the Senegalese consul came to Angola to settle the problem and to let the fishermen be set free (Sene, 2003). The Senegalese state paid for an aeroplane to bring them back to Senegal and gave damages to the fishermen who had lost their *pirogue* and outboard motor, since these goods were never returned (fieldnotes, 2004).

The *capitaine du port* had the following reflection as he explained this problem to me:

And why does an observer need to embark since that time? For actually an observer should not embark with these kind of boats. Because these boats do not have a fishing license for Senegal. They are not allowed to fish in Senegal, they just take fishermen and go fish somewhere else. And the work of an observer consists exactly of checking if the boat is complying with the regulations with regard to the mesh sizes of the nets and the size of the fish caught and that the boat respects the fishing zone in Senegal etceteras. (fieldnotes, 2004)

Despite these objections to the embarking of an observer on board of the *bateaux de ramassage*, the state decided to make this obligatory after what had happened in Angola. This was such a major event, that the state had to take some measures to prevent that it would happen again some day. Several sources stated “it was the first time ever the state intervened in the *pêche au ramassage*”, pointing in particular at the intervention of the Senegalese consul in Angola and the repatriation of the fishermen. The same remark accounts for the decision to embark an observer however: this is the first time the state intervenes in such a radical way and with such far reaching consequences in the *pêche au ramassage*. The authorities reasoned that a problem as “Angola” could not happen again with an observer on board. Therefore they changed the contract in 1999 and defined the mission of the observer in it, which was to check the fishing zones and to keep up a logbook during the whole voyage. In the next chapter I will set forth the way in which the observers conduct their tasks on board, here I will concentrate on the contract and the construction of actions and decisions that are put on paper. It is here where one can start to find some surprising matters.

The first thing that strikes is that the observers do not sign the contract. Their mission is stipulated in the contract as mentioned above, in such a way that one could consider them as full signing parties. With the non-signing of the contract by observers their mission becomes less official. Normally they do not even come to Saint Louis to embark there, but they are picked up by their *bateau de ramassage* in Dakar. A second irregularity can be found at the level of the DPSP in Dakar. All observers fall under the responsibility of the Head of the observatory department and the director of the DPSP. Since 1999 various problems on board of the *bateaux de ramassage* have been recorded and reported by observers to the observatory department. As a consequence the DPSP has, in cooperation with the Ministry of Fishery, written a ministerial instruction<sup>49</sup> and a memorandum<sup>50</sup> in relation to the *pêche au ramassage*. The ministerial instruction as well as the memorandum contain lists of conditions and regulations that observers, shipowners and captains of *bateaux de ramassage* have to comply with. There are several obligations on these lists that are not mentioned in the contract. In other words, both documents have not been integrated into the contract. Apparently there is a lack of communication and tuning between the DPSP in Dakar and the proper authorities in Saint Louis. This appears as well from the third surprising matter: the Head of the observatory department does not even have a

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<sup>49</sup> *Sécurité de la pêche au ramassage, instruction ministérielle n°00255/MP/DPSP/OBS/SP du mai 2003*

<sup>50</sup> *Note de service n°00661/DPSP/OBS/on du 12 août 2003*

contract. As I was talking with him about the problems that occur with the *bateaux*, he said to me:

But you, you have been to Saint Louis, you know these problems better than me, what occurs on board of these *bateaux*. And they are there [in Saint Louis], they sign the contracts over there. I do not even have a contract here. – No? – No, I don't. Well there was an observer who once took along a contract for me, but I do not know where I left it. Anyway, the contract has to be signed in Saint Louis. (fieldnotes, 2004)

This man has been working at the DPSP since its foundation in 1982. If he sincerely thinks that I know better than him the *pêche au ramassage*, with my one and a half months of studying it, then one can only conclude that there is a huge lack of interest from the side of the state for this practice. Or is it something else? Could there be another explanation for this attitude?

This question can be answered by a similar example, namely that of the intermediaries' role and position in the contract. In section 3.2.2 it became clear that the intermediary is not representing the fishermen and that he should not have that name in the contract. Moreover, it became clear that on a local as well as on a national level the state is acquainted with this. Why then does the state call them 'fishermen's representatives' in an official document such as the contract? If one takes into account the ambiguity of the state's attitude towards the practice of the *pêche au ramassage*, one can understand what the state is doing. On the one hand the state wants to have nothing to do with it, on the other hand it has already implicated itself in it since the beginning, by drawing up a contract. In other words, it wants to have the maximum of distance with maintenance of concern. The state shows concern by its involvement in the contract and its decision and actions that evolve around this contract. Distance is kept however, by means of irregularities like mentioned above: not obliging observers to sign the contract, not integrating documents of the DPSP in it, not even having one on DPSP level and not being real about the position of the intermediary. One could even conclude that the non-reflection of the state about the multitude of nationalities and countries involved in the *pêche au ramassage* (see 3.2.4) is an expression of this distance. This attitude has nothing to do with being corrupt or uninterested, but with a strategy that apparently works and for the time it works, won't be changed.

However, when things occur that show the strategy does not work anymore, it then becomes necessary to change the strategy. The "Angola" problem clearly showed the strategy did not work anymore. This problem resulted directly from the strategy as it was at the time, not only from the strategy of the state, but also from the strategy of the people that went at sea. Why would one fish legally if one could illegally fish a lot more a few countries further, when one is not checked anyway? This must have happened more often than this one time, with the difference that the other times the *bateaux* were not caught. And until the day they were caught, this strategy has worked. On this day however, it became a question of two countries at a state level, whereby a state at war had arrested civilians of another state. Clearly, this should and could not happen again. And thus the strategy has been changed by means of the obligatory embarking of an observer.

This change in strategy implicated an extra amount of concern and a diminution of distance of the state towards the *pêche au ramassage*. One can imagine that not everyone is happy with this. The above cited reflection of the *capitaine du port* (p. 23) shows this as he says: "(...) actually an observer should not embark with these kind of boats". It is not only that he thinks that observers should not embark on these boats because of the technical reasons he mentions, but because he feels the Senegalese state has nothing to do with this practice as well. As he continued

about the “Angola” problem he showed how he felt about the damages that were given by the state to the fishermen:

This is something that the state was not obliged to do, for the state was not responsible for this, it did not have anything to do with this. Also, the state gains nothing with this, with this whole kind of fishery, for the Koreans do not pay anything for it, they do not even pay for the fact that they are lying here at anchor before the coast. It is also because the state does not want to *se mouiller*<sup>51</sup> with this form of fishery, it does not want to legalise it on the one hand and on it does not want to abandon it as well for all the fishermen that are there and that gain their livelihood with it.

Three things are said in the above quotation. First of all, the state cannot be held responsible for the events in Angola. Secondly, the state does not gain a profit out of this kind of fishery in terms of money. These are two statements that try to respectively emphasise and justify the distance that the state desires to have and keep towards the *pêche au ramassage*. For, as said in the third statement, the state does not want to *se mouiller* with this form of fishery, apparently this would implicate too big a risk. Part of this risk is stated in the continuation of the same sentence: the state cannot abandon this kind of fishery, because there are so many fishermen depending on it to gain their livelihood with. This reason is widely spread and given by many people involved whenever one talks about changes or improvements that could be done with regard to the *pêche au ramassage*. And this is exactly what attaches the state to this practice, for the state does gain several profits from it. In contrast with the statement above, the state does gain a profit from this in terms of money, for several taxes have to be paid by the *bateaux de ramassage*, such as harbour and consignor taxes. More important however, there is a social gain for the state. As an officer at the DSPS said:

Imagine that the *bateaux de ramassage* would stop working. That would mean that there will be one hundred more *pirogues* to fish in Saint Louis and to put their catches on the market there. Not only will it be difficult then, to catch enough fish, but also to get a good price for one’s fish. One can imagine what it will mean for the market price of fish if there are one hundred more *pirogues* that sale their fish on the market.

Yet, he is still being optimistic. It is easy to calculate that there will be not hundred, but 320 *pirogues* entering the Saint Louisian market if the *bateaux de ramassage* ever decide to stop<sup>52</sup>.

In sum, the ambiguity of the state’s attitude consist of a strategy of keeping distance with maintenance of concern. The distance has never been very great however, as the state has involved itself in the *pêche au ramassage* since the beginning by formulating the contract. Recently the distance has become even smaller with the reports of observers ending up on the desks of high officers at the DPSP every three months. The reason for this strategy lies in the fact that the *pêche au ramassage* has become an important provider of work for many fishermen in Saint Louis. Therefore, if the state would really *se mouiller* in this practice and would start to solve the problems that are there, this could mean the end of the *pêche au ramassage* and would create an even bigger problem: the arrival of 320 extra *pirogues* in the waters of Saint Louis.

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<sup>51</sup> The metaphorical language is so strong that I chose not to translate this word: literally *se mouiller* means ‘to get wet’ figuratively it means ‘to compromise oneself, to run a risk’

<sup>52</sup> Eight *bateaux* times forty *pirogues* makes 320 *pirogues*

However, whether this fear is real will be explored in the next chapter, where the daily practice on board of the *bateaux de ramassage* will be explained.

### 3.3 Concluding remarks

The *pêche au ramassage* is a form of cooperation whereby entire artisanal fishery units are put on an industrial freezer-trawler to fish in the waters of countries other than Senegal. Its origins lie in Joal, where a businessman first got this idea. After voyages with fishermen from different places in Senegal, the best fishermen were found in Saint Louis. Since 1982 the practice has been evolving. Today, eight *bateaux* carrying 320 *pirogues*, which is twenty percent of the *pirogues* in the Region of Saint Louis, provide work for sixteen hundred fishermen, around 128 Senegalese sailors and eight intermediaries. In other words, it is not a practice that can easily be ignored in its importance for Saint Louis.

The reason for this practice to only endure in Saint Louis was searched in the (self) image of Saint Louisian fishermen, who are known and said to be hard workers who are used to harsh living and working conditions. Other factors that were of importance were the pressure of the population, the ongoing depletion of the fishery resource in Saint Louis and the conflict with Mauritania. By means of the 'official' contract, the intermediaries, fishermen, shipowners and their representatives, the state and the observers were introduced, and their positions as described in the contract were compared to the actual situation. Most striking was the difference between the official and actual position of the intermediaries. Officially they were called 'fishermen's representatives', but in practice they are recruited by the shipowners and worked on their behalf for the recruitment and control of the fishermen. More ambiguity can be found in the perception of the contract itself, which is seen by the authorities as the official contract, while it is almost unknown by fishermen whom it says to represent. Instead of this contract, fishermen take the preparatory meeting with the intermediaries more seriously. The problems that this can create will be shown in the next chapter.

The way in which the state has treated this practice shows an ambiguity as well. The state itself had demanded the drafting of a contract between fishermen and shipowners, thereby implying itself in this practice since the beginning. However, it has things continue without making major changes, until the events in Angola forced the state to review this practice. So it was decided that observers have to embark on each *bateau*, which has as a consequence that through the observation reports, state officers were confronted with the realities on board. What those realities are and how the state handled these will be set forth on the basis of these observation reports in the next chapter.



3.1 Map of Saint Louis



3.2 Sky view of Saint Louis with fishermen's district Guet Ndar in the front



3.3 Pirogue named after *bateau de ramassage* 'Praia de Buarcos'





3.4 Preparations: *bateau de ramassage* in the background, fishing gear in the front



3.5 Sailing off to bring the gear to the *bateau de ramassage*





#### 4. “It goes beyond fishing now, it has become a community”; daily life in the *pêche au ramassage*

The title of this chapter is a quote of an officer at the DPSP in Dakar. Others have made similar descriptions about the *pêche au ramassage*, such as “it has become like an enlarged family”. The correspondence between these characterisations lies in the fact that they both use a social phenomenon to describe the *pêche au ramassage*. Both ‘community’ and ‘family’ are social constructions of people who live together within a certain setting and by certain rules, norms and values. This coincides with the following quote:

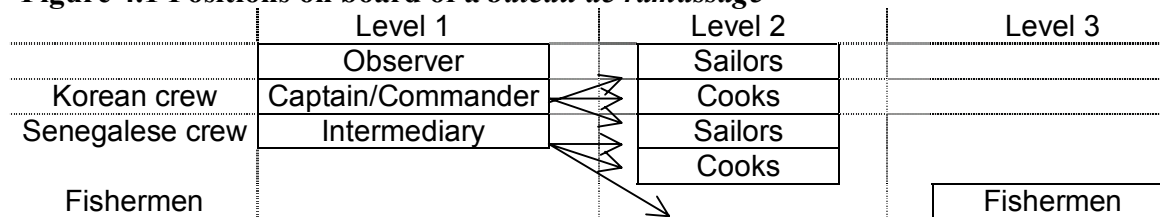
The reinterpretation of local halieutic institutions leads to their deconstruction as elements of a coherent system of relations that are built around the fishing activity, in order to reconstruct them as a domain amongst others, of rules and organisations constructed and negotiated by different agents, who, in order to be fishermen, are social actors in the first place. (Chauveau, 2000, p. 57)

This chapter will focus on the rules and organisations of daily life of people involved in the *pêche au ramassage*. A reconstruction and analysis of this daily life with its routines, problems and conflicts will be made with several observation reports as point of departure, in order to gain a more in-depth understanding of the practice of the *pêche au ramassage*.

##### 4.1 Organisation of work on board of a *bateau de ramassage*

Chapter five has shown that the official contract does not tell much about the organisation of the work on board of the ship; there is not even mention of the fishing activity of fishermen (see section 4.2.3). There is an organisation of work however which is more or less the same for every *bateau de ramassage*. Figure 4.1 shows the different positions on board.

**Figure 4.1 Positions on board of a *bateau de ramassage***



One can roughly discern three ‘levels’ of ranks on board. The observer should ideally be above all parties. The Korean crew consists of a captain and a commander who are in command of their own crew of sailors, their cooks and the Senegalese sailors that are taken along by the intermediary. The Senegalese crew consists of the intermediary, who has command over his crew of Senegalese sailors and the cooks. Also, he is in command of the fishermen, who are not part of the Senegalese crew. The fishermen are yet lower in rank than the sailors, as will be made clear in the next sections of this chapter.

When a *bateau* has left Saint Louis and has picked up an observer in Dakar, it will head for any country for which it has a fishing license; normally these are countries like Guinee, Guinee-Bissau, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Gabon and Angola. The trip to Angola takes about fifteen days and is the farthest away, while sailing to Guinee will take one or two days. When the *bateau* arrives, all forty *pirogues* are discharged and attached to a cord at the back of the *bateau* (see picture 4.2). At four o'clock in the morning the fishermen are waked up by a cassette with Islamic prayers that resounds from the speakers. Senegalese sailors take care of the distribution of bread, coffee, water, fuel, bait and ice to the fishermen. Finally, when the crews have found their *pirogue* and equipment, they will sail off and go out to fish all day. They will not return until at least seven or eight o'clock in the evening, sometimes they even return at midnight. The *pirogues* can lign up alongside the *bateau*, where the Senegalese sailors will discharge the catches. The intermediary and the commander will sit next to a balance to weigh, categorise and registrate the catches of each pirogue on a list and a receipt (picture 4.3). While the fish is being washed, packed and frozen by the Senegalese and Korean sailors, the fishermen will get their second meal for the day, which is *tieboudienne*, a Senegalese rice-and-fish dish. This meal is cooked every day, with the exception of the official resting day, when there is chicken on the menu.

## 4.2 Living conditions on board

This section will focus on the living conditions on board of *bateaux de ramassage*, such as proper shelter, food, water, hygiene and health. The state of these basic needs constitutes a structural problem for fishermen. First of all, the shelter the *bateau* offers to the different people involved is described by one of the observation reports as such:

The fishermen's representative is well lodged (...) The foreigners and the fishermen's representative occupy spacious and air-conditioned cabins with lockers. With regard to the thing where the fishermen live, I am not even capable to describe you how narrow and unhealthy their rooms are. (DPSP, 1999)

The tone of this observer is quite indignant. This indignation does not only stem from the state of the “thing where the fishermen live”, but also from his own situation on board. As 1999 was the first year observers went at sea with the *bateaux de ramassage*, their position on board was not yet very clear. Therefore the first observation reports account of the lack of respect for the observer which often manifests itself by their living standards on board. This observer was not satisfied with his own cabin, which he found unclean and small and which he had to share with the male nurse.

However, the indignation of the observer does not alter his statement about the shelter of the fishermen. Normally the sleeping sections of the fishermen are situated on deck at the back of the *bateau* and are separated from those of the Senegalese sailors and the Korean crew. This section consists of a four storeys high construction. Each storey is one metre in height and has a surface of approximately 25 square metres. One storey accommodates ten *pirogues*, thus giving room for fifty people. The construction as a whole consequently contains two hundred people (see picture 4.1 at the end of this section). A fisherman described the situation like this:

We sleep like chickens, like chickens in a shed. You cannot even sit up straight there where we sleep. The most difficult is when you are the last one to go to sleep and you

climb on to your storey and you smell the odour and feel the warmth that all those people give off. Then you think by yourself, *bilahi walahi*<sup>53</sup>, this is real slavery.

This is not the only time the word ‘slavery’ was used in respect to the *pêche au ramassage*. One could choose to take such characterisations literally, as Gueye (2002) has chosen to do. He states that the *pêche au ramassage* constitutes of a “new form of slavery” (p.18). One could as well interpret this as an expression of this fisherman’s frustration with a situation in which he and his fellow-fishermen find themselves and which he detests, but which he finds he is unable to change. In either way, describing the *pêche au ramassage* as slavery is the strongest way of rejecting the state of living and working conditions on board.

More importantly, it is not just the living conditions of fishermen as such that engender these kind of characterisations. It is also the state of these conditions in comparison with the state of the conditions of others on board, such as the intermediary and the Koreans. If everyone on board would sleep under the same conditions as the fishermen, no one would be talking about slavery. The difference between the shelters of different ranks on board is shown in picture 4.1 at the end of this section. Picture 4.1.3 shows a cabin for the Senegalese sailor crew. Although these cabins are not luxury, they do have ‘real’ beds, air-conditioning, television and video. Moreover, these are on the inside of the ship, where these are less exposed to heavy weather conditions than the fishermen’s construction. According to fishermen and several observation reports, the intermediary sleeps in the same section as the non-Senegalese crew. These great differences in quality of living space is thus creating an atmosphere which people describe as ‘slavery’ or ‘exploitation’.

A second basic need that is lacking on board of *bateaux de ramassage* is nourishment, in the shape of food and water. One of the observation reports mentions that: “There is a ravenous hunger on board” (DPSP, 2000). Fishermen explained that their diet on board consist of two breads for breakfast, rice and fish for dinner and two litres of water. Lunch is not served to them and they thus have to work the entire day with two breads as only energy source (fieldnotes, 2004). Yet again there is a difference between the fishermen on the one hand and the people that stay on board on the other. The Senegalese crew gets the same rice and fish as the fishermen, but they get it twice a day. According to an observation report, the intermediary and the Koreans are the only ones who eat well:

While we are eating rice with a little bit of fish without any seasoning nor vegetables every day; the Koreans, Ganeans and Chinese dispose of very varied and good quality food (meat of beef, sheep, pigs, vegetables). The fishermen’s representative is well lodged and eats the same meal with the foreigners in the refectory. (DPSP, 1999)

Another observer complained: “I was badly lodged, badly nourished and bound to the diet of fishermen as if I was not a part of the square of officers”(DPSP, 1999).

In addition, the two litres of water per person is meant for drinking as well as for personal hygiene. A Senegalese ex-sailor of a *bateau de ramassage* set forth the difficult situation in which he found the fishermen to be, as he, being a sailor, was getting three meals a day and enough water to drink and wash himself:

There is not enough water, so the fishermen wash themselves hardly ever, or by turns (...). On board however, when all fishermen are gone and there is just the on board

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<sup>53</sup> “I swear before God”. (Arabic) Muslim exclamation to underline the seriousness of the speaker

crew left, we all wash ourselves. We can wash our clothes as well, because we aren't with many people. However we try to not wash our clothes in front of the fishermen to not frustrate them. (fieldnotes, 2004)

A fisherman stated:

Sometimes there are people who wear the same clothes during the whole voyage. There are people who wash themselves each day as well. If I am the one to distribute the water and you are my friend or my little brother, then it will be easy for you to get water. Sometimes we are having difficulties getting enough water to drink. (fieldnotes, 2004)

One's position or personal relation with the distributor of water thus determines the amount of water one will get each day. There is one *bateau de ramassage* that distributes twenty litres a day for each *pirogue*, namely the Portuguese, which means four litres per individual.

When asked which problems occur on board, one of the shipowners' representatives answered:

Maybe the cooks should try to cook better. The fishermen have enough to eat however, and are often very satisfied, they go to the market themselves and they have their own cook whom they choose themselves. Maybe the only one who is complaining is the observer who is making a suggestion. But it is not a five stars hotel! (fieldnotes, 2004)

Being a representative of a shipowner it is logical that this man states the opposite as to what fishermen and observers are stating. However, the fact that he came up with the food problem himself, could as well confirm the statements of fishermen and observers, even though he is defending his position. Apparently this is a hot issue, and complaints about it do not only stay on board, but reaches Saint Louis and Dakar as well.

A third basic need is health, which depends a lot on hygiene, nutrition and physical condition. Even though each fisherman is obliged to be vaccinated against tropical diseases, there are still people getting ill. One of the observation reports mentioned:

(...) in the first two weeks of the operations a general tiredness has got hold of almost all the sailors and fishermen with cases of disease and/or disorders as: intestinal parasites, dermatoses dysentery's, caused by unhealthiness. In addition there is a non-energetic alimentation, with a ration of rice and fish for both lunch and dinner, a surplus of work and an insufficiency of water. (DPSP, 2003)

In order to overcome diseases on board, it is an obligation for the shipowner to embark a male nurse. However, this male nurse is often recruited by the intermediary and is part of the Senegalese sailor crew on board. An ex-sailor on a *bateau de ramassage* stated:

The intermediary recruited me and charged me with the pharmacy, the distribution of water and bread and nursing activities. – Are you a nurse? – No, but I have done some first aid in the army. (fieldnotes, 2004)

Someone who has “done some first aid in the army” is not capable of recognising and curing diseases. In addition, this incapability is further complicated by inadequate pharmacies on board.

Several people accounted of people who had died on board of *bateaux de ramassage*, of which the following is an example:

He was just ill, he had a stomach-ache. He had only been ill for three days before he died, and it was a negligence, because at the time he was ill there had been two small boats besides us to tranship the fish (...). So they could have taken the ill man ashore, but they said: "he is just lazy, he is not ill". But after three days he died, at 11.30 am. (...) There was a doctor, but he said, I cannot do anything for him, we have to bring him to the Ivory Coast. (...) The *dirigeant* did not even visit him when he was sick, it was only on the day that he died that he went to take a look (...) and he said to him: "you did not work for three days". And the fisherman said to him: "everything that has happened to me is because of you, for if you had helped me or if you would have talked well with the captain then I could have been debarked". Then he has called a friend to come cite the Koran and before the recitation was even over, he had died. (fieldnotes, 2004)

This tragic example shows several things. First of all, it shows that fishermen are not able to claim the right to be debarked if they are ill. This fisherman has blamed the intermediary for this, who's task it is to intermediate between the fishermen and the commanders of ship. It is quite plausible that the commanders would have complied with a request of the intermediary to debark the ill man, considering the position of intermediaries on board<sup>54</sup>. Secondly, the doctor was not able to do anything for the patient, both on a physical and relational level. In other words, he could not cure him nor was he able to persuade the intermediary or the commanders to debark him. The inability to cure could be due to the fact that the doctor was actually a trainee instead of a qualified doctor, and to the little medication there is in board. The apparent inability to debark his patient could be due to the fact that the doctor is a member of the crew of the intermediary, and thus falls under his authority. Thirdly, it apparently happens that fishermen who are tired or who do not feel like going out to fish, report themselves sick to not have to work. This is not illogical, considering the working and living conditions as described above, and the fact that they work seven days a week, during three months, with only one resting day.

The reaction of the others on board to the death of this fisherman was as such:

Everybody calmed down. The *dirigeant* has talked to the captain of the *bateau* in order to stop the voyage and to return to Saint Louis with the body. And we did not say anything, because the *pêche au ramassage dafa metti*<sup>55</sup> you know, you are tired and if there is anything that enables you to go home, you are happy. We waited until we arrived here [in Saint Louis] and then we said that it had been a problem of negligence. But before that we had not given any reaction.

Apparently fishermen did not get outraged because of the unnecessary death of this fisherman, but instead kept quiet in order to be sure to get home earlier. In this example the illness of this man had a fatal ending. However, this does not mean that cases of serious illness are always treated like this. There are many cases known as well in which ill people are debarked and if necessary flown in to a Senegalese hospital. However, this example has shown that when clear directives and professional medical knowledge is lacking, this can have fatal consequences.

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<sup>54</sup> The next section will elaborate on this position

<sup>55</sup> *dafa metti*: it hurts, it is difficult (Wolof)

In sum, there exists a structural separation on board of *bateaux de ramassage* between fishermen, Senegalese sailors, intermediaries and the foreign crew. In this separation the fishermen are at the bottom of the ranks, followed by respectively the Senegalese sailors, intermediaries and the foreign crew. However, section 3.1.2 of the previous chapter explained that Saint Louisian fishermen are proud of their identity of tough men who are resistant to harsh living and working conditions. Fishermen do resist these conditions while on board, nonetheless they complain about these when they are ashore. This could be explained by the rationale that the harder the living conditions were, that one accounts of and thus has resisted, the tougher one will get in the eyes of the listener. Even though this might have played a role in the accounts of fishermen about their conditions on board, there are still other people involved who have stated the same about these conditions, such as observers, intermediaries and (ex) Senegalese sailors.

Picture 4.1 (in the appendixes) shows a *bateau de ramassage* lying for anchor in Saint Louis that was going to leave the next day. At the back of the *bateau* (on the left of the picture) one can see the construction where fishermen sleep and live. Picture 1 shows the height of each storey; one cannot stand up straight. Picture 2 shows the entrance of this construction and again the height of the storeys (see picture 4.4 for an inside view of these storeys). Picture 3 shows the sleeping cabins of Senegalese sailors, which are found on the inside of the *bateau*. Picture 4 shows the kitchen that is used by the Koreans, also on the inside of the *bateau*. The Senegalese kitchen then is showed on picture 5. This is on the outside of the *bateau* and is used to cook meals for two hundred persons each day. On picture 6 one can see the *pirogues* laying piled up at the front of the *bateau*.

### 4.3 Conflicts on board

The separation in terms of basic needs between the different groups of people on board of *bateaux de ramassage* already show the difference in rank between these groups. In addition to these tangible aspects, there are less tangible, relational aspects as well that define one's position on board. One example of a relational aspect is the division of labour. Each group knows what to do and when to do this. However, there are several relational aspects, within and beyond this division of labour, that can be problematic. Whereas the previous section has set forth differences in rank in terms of access to basic needs, this section will focus on the differences in rank in terms of access to power.

“Every demand that does not pass through the intermediary, will not find a hearing” (observation report, DPSP, 1999). In various observation reports one can find these kind of comments about the position of the intermediary in relation to others on board. Other reports stated that the intermediary is the only one who the commander of ship listens to and that he has almost the same regards as the commander (DPSP, 1999). In the previous chapter I discussed the special position of intermediaries in the preparation phase of *bateau de ramassage*. The ambiguity of his position was shown by the different names he has: intermediary, fishermen's representative, *controleur*, *dirigeant* and black shipowner. In spite of or maybe because of this ambiguity, intermediaries have secured themselves a strong position on board in relation to others. This strong position appears from the quoted statements of observers, but also from intermediaries themselves, as one of them explained:

I had the responsibility over the fishermen. (...) Once we were on board the captain of the ship did not have the right to command the fishermen. All he could say was “that fish is not good, I will not take it”. (...) The commander had to talk solely to me and then I would talk to the fishermen. (fieldnotes, 2004)

One can see that intermediaries take their task as go-between as literally as possible: they do not allow fishermen and commanders to negotiate directly with one another, everything should pass through the intermediary. For intermediaries this is a way of handling conflicts and problems that can occur on board. Some intermediaries compared themselves with “a police officer or an arbitrator, which is necessary, since there are two hundred people on board” (fieldnotes, 2004). Intermediaries have the most central position on board of *bateaux de ramassage*. They have contact with every rank and have control over the Senegalese crew and fishermen.

The way in which intermediaries use this position is open to debate. Intermediaries say they stand up for the rights of fishermen, while fishermen state this is not the case. One of the intermediaries stated: “Whenever the Spaniards did not respect the fishermen, I stopped the work and went home” (fieldnotes, 2004). Another said: “I always defended the fishermen, and I did not accept fishermen to be maltreated, insulted or getting in to a fight with the *toubabs*” (fieldnotes, 2004). A retired intermediary said that his life on board circled around the equality of all fishermen, for he did not want fishermen to think that the *toubabs* were cheating them or making them suffer by giving them miserable working conditions:

If I was not supervising there were disparities in the distribution of fuel and bait: the fishermen who were catching the most would get the most fuel and bait. I always wanted everybody to get the same, for the prices of the fish are the same for everybody as well. (fieldnotes, 2004)



In either way, the depictions these intermediaries gave of the relation between fishermen and *toubabs*, reveal that there exists a tension between them. Apparently maltreatment, insults, inequality and even fights are a part of daily life of fishermen board. A fisherman stated the following about the role of the intermediary: “It is he who creates the problems, he tells the Koreans not to talk with fishermen, and he tells them that fishermen are mad and mean” (fieldnotes, 2004).

However, conflicts do not only occur between fishermen and others, but also between fishermen themselves:

There have been cases of fights between young fishermen. The inspector has written all their names down and has threatened to call the navy to let them be imprisoned in Conakry during the remainder of the voyage and to let them pay the transport, so that the fights would stop. (DPSP, 2000)

Another observer wrote in his report: “The conflicts on board between fishermen are manifold” (DPSP, 2000). Yet another has an explanation for this: “The young fishermen are very stubborn and respect no one” (DPSP, 1999). There is no information however on the contents of these conflicts, or on what the fishermen are stubborn about. In fact, these kind of statements coincide with the statements people made about Saint Louisian fishermen, which I have discussed in chapter 3.1.2.

Next to intermediating between different parties, intermediaries have another important task. It is their job to weigh and register the daily captures of each *pirogue*. They thus have access to one of the most important matters on board, which is the balance. Since fishermen do not get paid according to a fixed salary, but according to each kilogram of fish they catch, the balance is crucial for their payment. An officer at the DPSP pointed out one of the biggest problems with this: “intermediaries trick the balances” (fieldnotes, 2004). In other words, they deliberately calibrate the balance in such a way that it will indicate less weight than is put on it in reality. As a result, the shipowners will have to pay less to the fishermen and gain more when they sell it to others. Nevertheless it is not always the case that balances are being tricked, but when they are it creates frustration amongst fishermen and adds to the tension on board, since with a tricked balance they are not receiving the money they should receive.

The only reason for fishermen to participate in the *pêche au ramassage* is to catch fish and gain money. Yet it is not the fishermen who have access to the balance and they are not authorised to check it. According to the official contract, the intermediaries are representing the fishermen and could thus keep an eye on the balance in favour of the fishermen. In the previous chapter and in this chapter again, it was shown and substantiated that instead of representing the fishermen, intermediaries are representing the shipowners. One could draw this conclusion again from the practice with the balance. This problem exists since the beginning of the *pêche au ramassage*, as it is stipulated in the contract since 1985 and in the ministerial instruction of 2003, that commanders have to check and rightly calibrate the balances on each voyage. However, it is not very likely that commanders will do this, as it is they who have the biggest interest in a tricked balance, and it could have been their idea in the first place.

In addition, it is the commander and the intermediary who decide for which price they will buy the fish, for either EUROPE, AFRICA or TS, often on the basis of the quality of the fish instead of on the agreed species. This becomes clear in the following example given by a fisherman:

They give us two bags of ice each day. We have an icebox in our *pirogue* that can contain two hundred kilos of fish. These two bags of ice are never enough to conserve the fish. (...) at the end of the day, they will only take half of our fish as EUROPE and the rest they will take as AFRICA, because they state this fish is not good any more. While it is the same fish as EUROPE! (fieldnotes, 2004)

It is not impossible that after buying the fish as AFRICA from fishermen, the shipowners sell it as EUROPE to wholesalers. This will appear from section 4.4 in this chapter.

In fact, these kind of practices fit into the picture of a shipowner who is trying to keep his costs as low as possible, in order to gain the most profit. This is why fishermen get the minimum of food, water, ice, fuel and bait. More importantly however, one should not forget that fishermen pay for these goods, by means of the price they are receiving for their fish. It is also important to keep in mind that intermediaries have a direct interest in the amount of fish that is caught, since their salary is a commission of four percent of the total price that is paid to fishermen. In Box 4.1 the total revenues and the revenues per actor are calculated.

#### **Box 4.1 Costs and benefits of the *peche au ramassage***

Example: 'Praia de Buarcos' in Angola from 11-05-2000 till 04-08-2000 (86 days) on the basis of the observation report (DPSP, 2000)

##### **Total revenue by tonnes of fish caught:**

Europa:	328,745 x € 0.57 = € 187,384
Africa:	12,536 x € 0.31 = € 3,886
Total:	341,281 = € 191,270

##### **Revenues per actor:**

###### **- Average revenue per fisherman:**

188 fishermen + 36 pirogues + 36 outboard motors = 260 shares  
 € 191,270 / 260 = € 736

###### **- Intermediary:**

4% x € 191,270 = € 7651

###### **- Senegalese sailor:**

86 days x € 5.38 = € 427

###### **- Shipowner's representative:**

4% x € 191,270 = € 7651

###### **- Observer:**

86 days x € 24 = € 2064

###### **- Shipowner:**

Costs		Benefits	
Fishermen	191,270	341,281 kg x € 5*	1,706,405
Intermediary	7,651		
Shipowners rep	7,651		
Sailors (16 x 427)	6,832		
Observer	2,064		
Bait	12,307		
Fuel <i>pirogues</i>	27,692		
Fuel <i>bateau</i> *	27,692		
Food*	45,296		
Shipowners crew* (25 x 2000)	50,000		
<b>Total</b>	<b>378,455</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,706,405</b>

**Estimated profit: € 1,706,405 – € 378,455 = € 1,327,950**

\* These figures are estimations. The fuel for the *bateau* is estimated to be the same as the total fuel used by the 36 *pirogues* that are on board. The estimated costs for food are calculated as follows: € 2.30 a day x 229 people x 86 days = € 45,296. This could be lower, since food is bought on the local market. The number of people in the shipowners crew is correct, their salary is based on the salary of the observer. With regard to the benefits only the price is an estimation. This price could be higher, since normally these fish already yield more than € 5 p/kg in Dakar.

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One can see from these figures that food and the payment of the fishermen are in absolute sense the highest cost items. However, when one compares the average revenue of a fisherman with that of the intermediary, one will find that the latter is more than ten times as high. Further, even though this remains an estimation, it does show that there should be some kind of room for manoeuvre possible.

Another problematic issue on board is the supposed racism or discrimination that is occurring. One of the observers reported: “On board there exists an intolerable discrimination between the Senegalese and the foreigners” (DPSP, 1999). According to him this discrimination appeared from the fact that the foreigners eat and sleep better than and separate from the Senegalese crew and fishermen (DPSP, 1999). Another wrote in his report: “the Koreans are badly informed and racists”. However, the foreigners could not have been complete racists, as they treated the intermediary with the same regards as themselves, yet the intermediary is a Senegalese too. These observers do not stand alone however in their description of the situation. The *capitaine du port* made a similar remark:

The Koreans have a very racist behaviour (...). On board they make Senegalese do work that a simple sailor does not do. For example, the Koreans do not enter in the hold or in the cold-storage room, it is solely the Senegalese that are made to work there. (fieldnotes, 2004)

Here it is the division of labour that is used to illustrate the ‘racist behaviour’ of the Koreans towards Senegalese. It is debatable however, whether a strict separation of work and living conditions on board is discrimination or even racism. Even so, a fisherman told something that seemed more like racism or discrimination:

Whenever a fisherman walks up to a Korean, he will say that the fisherman is mad. One will never find a Korean come and sit next to fishermen. And when a fisherman goes to sit next to a Korean, the Korean will stand up and sit farther down. There are fishermen that go on these voyages during three months and when they come back they did not even talk once to a Korean. (fieldnotes, 2004)

In either way, stories like this show the discontent on the Senegalese side of the way in which most of them are treated on board.

However, this does not hinder some Senegalese, whether they are fishermen or part of the Senegalese crew, and Koreans to talk to each other and sometimes develop a kind of friendship. These contacts initially passed through the intermediary, as one fisherman explained. The commander had asked the intermediary what his name was, as he only knew the number of the *pirogue* he was working with. When the Korean knew his name he contacted him and that is how their acquaintancy started. However, the fisherman said: “There were some fishermen who went

to see their Korean acquaintances as soon as they got back from fishing, but I did not. Only if I needed something, like sugar or matches, I went to see him” (fieldnotes, 2004). For this fisherman, a friendly relation with one of the Koreans allowed him to get some things he needed. This could be one of the reasons for others as well to enter into relations with Koreans, since once one is known on board, one might get a better position in the future and become a part of the Senegalese crew for example. Others might establish friendships just because they enjoy having friendships.

There is one day that is less stressful than the other days on board, and this is the *jour de repos*, or resting day. An ex-sailor radiantly explained about these days:

A resting day is like a party. Each *pirogue* will get a box of chicken. (...) In the morning the fishermen can sleep as long as they want. Nobody will wake them up. (...) And on that day the entire *bateau* is full of life, there is music, if the VCR is functioning we watch action movies. For lunch we will have rice with chicken. Some fishermen will play card games, others will wash themselves or their clothes. The captains of the *pirogues* will look at their receipts and calculate how much they have caught already, and where they are in comparison with the others. At dinner we eat rice with chicken again. (fieldnotes, 2004)

Resting days are thus the only day that fishermen have the right to eat three meals plus the only day that chicken is served. As this only happens once in ninety days, one can imagine that it really is a festive day. One of the fishermen stated however that:

On the resting day we wash the outboard motors, we repair the material, we dress our hair and we change our clothes. So in fact it is not a repose.

In the quotation of the ex-sailor one can see again the importance of the competition element of the voyage. Not only is calculated how much one have caught, but also where one stands in relation to the others. As pointed out in the previous chapter, the competition plays a role in the identity of Saint Louisian fishermen (3.1.2) and is even used as a means to pep each other up before embarking on the *bateau de ramassage* (3.2.3). The receipt fishermen get after each weighing session plays a central role in this, as:

They weigh the fish and we get a receipt, and thus we get a receipt every day, because you know, it is a kind of competition, there will be a first, a second and a third one, there is a certain rivalry. Among ourselves we talk about it you know if you are the first, everybody wants to be the first.

Fishermen I talked with were able to sum up the great winners and losers of the previous voyages they had made. Not only did they know the names of the crewmembers, but also the exact tonnage they had caught. The losers and the ‘miserable’ amount of fish they had caught, were ridiculed. One can thus conclude that it has become a question of honour and a thing to boast about, to be the ‘first’ of the *bateau*. The winners are announced and honoured on board by the intermediary and the commander. The first, second, third and sometimes fourth winners are called to come on the bridge, where they get a speech from the intermediary and then will get their prices. Mostly this is a bag full of domestic things, like soap, rice and sugar. The honour is the most important price however.

It is clear that the relations between and amongst the different groups of people on board are not without tension and conflict. Access to the most important matters on board is allocated to the intermediary and the commander. This can create a problem whenever misuse is made of these matters. Although it might seem as if fishermen do not have any power in relation to the commander and the intermediary, this is not always the case. They do indeed have the ability to change the course of events on board, be it under certain circumstances, for they are with two hundred people in contrast to the Koreans who are with only ten people. In the next section examples will be given of what happens when fishermen decide to use their power as a group.

#### 4.4 Change in the course of events

This section will show that fishermen have the ability to enforce change in the course of events voyages with *bateaux de ramassage*, illustrated by two examples. Both examples are reported in observation reports, the second one however is complemented with accounts of a fisherman, in order to explain the problem from a different point of view. In addition, both examples are a result of the field of tension that exists between the official contract and the preparatory meeting (see 3.2.3) and the legitimacy they respectively have. In the first example it is the preparatory meeting that prevailed over the contract, in the second example this will be less clear.

The first case happened in the course of a voyage in 2000, the observer reported the following:

The seventy days lasting voyage has been shortened because of a misunderstanding between the shipping company and the fishermen's responsible, who had said to the fishermen in a meeting in Saint Louis that the voyage would stop after 55 days of fishing, instead of seventy days of fishing as was signed in the presence of the authorities in Saint Louis. The shipowner had asked the fishermen's responsible to respect the contract as signed in the presence of the authorities, but he could not go back [to what he had said] any more and ask the fishermen the five extra days. This was impossible since it had been himself who had said to the fishermen during a meeting in Saint Louis that there would be 65 fishing days.

The intermediary had thus made a mistake in the transmission of the contract to the fishermen. In the preparatory meeting he had told the fishermen that there would be only 65 days of fishing, while the contract was written and signed for seventy fishing days. It was not until the end of the voyage that this misunderstanding came out. Even with pressure of the shipowner to stick to the written contract, the intermediary chose to let the preparatory meeting prevail. The observer accounts for the intermediary's conduct by stating that it had been the intermediary himself who had said this to the fishermen. In other words, the intermediary was keeping his word to the fishermen. There could have been other reasons that played a role in his choice, such as the possibility of a strike of the fishermen if the five days had been added. A strike would have caused the rage of the shipowner as well. Consequently, the best option for the intermediary was to go home and admit his mistake.

The second example shows another way of acting of the intermediary. This incident had took place a few months before I came to Saint Louis and was thus still fresh in the memories of the people involved. What had happened this time? The observation report states the following (since the statement is not very clear, I will cut it into pieces and explain it per piece):

On the 63rd fishing day a conflict occurred, since in the contract it is clearly stipulated that there are two price categories of fish per kilogram, namely: EUROPE and AFRICA, but on board this is not the case, because a third category has been created (TS), fixed at a price of 120 FCFA per kilogram (...)

As explained in 3.2.3 and 3.2.4 there are officially two price categories for the fish that is caught, which are EUROPE and AFRICA. During preparatory meetings it can happen that a third category is established, however this is an unofficial arrangement, thus not taken up into the contract. Observers do normally not know about these arrangements, as they do not take part in these preparatory meetings. This is the case for this observer as well. He continues:

(...) while the clauses of the contract are very clear, that is, the products EUROPE: capitaine, soles and red daurade are bought at 375 FCFA/kg and all the other species have to be bought at 200 FCFA/kg, whereas in the ship's transshipment papers they wrote down AFRICA for the products that they call TS in their notebooks or pads during the weighing, and which they buy at 120 FCFA/kg.

In other words, the shipowner buys the fish from the fishermen as TS, that is for a price which is 80 FCFA less than the official AFRICA price. In the meantime, he does tranship this same fish as AFRICA. Consequently, he will pocket the 80 FCFA difference between the two. It is now that the observer introduces the fishermen:

The fishermen found out about this through other fishermen of the vessel CARIS [a *bateau de ramassage*] who had came on board to ask for fuel and even these latter sold on their ship for 150 CFA/kg. (DPSP, 2003)

Here the observer is mixing up two things. The fishermen did not find out about "this". They did not know that there was a difference between the prices which were written down on their receipts and those that were registered in the ship's logbook. However, they did find out about the other *bateau de ramassage* where TS was bought for 150 FCFA/kg instead of 120 FCFA/kg and they went to speak with their intermediary. In a meeting on board between the fishermen and the intermediary, they demanded their TS to be bought for 150 FCFA/kg as well. This was not granted and thus the fishermen decided to stop the voyage and return home.

This problem had a deeper dimension however, as became clear from the accounts of fishermen about this incident. This dimension has everything to do with the preparatory meeting, where three categories had been fixed: EUROPE, AFRICA and TS. As usual, each fish specie had been categorised in one of these three categories. However, once on board, all the species that did not belong to EUROPE were bought as TS, thus eliminating the AFRICA category. When one of the fishermen (Abdou) had found out about this, he discussed it with some other fishermen. He said:

It was just me and five other captains of *pirogues* who had assisted to the preparatory meeting, the rest had not been there. And thus we did not have enough force at sea, for the others did not know exactly what had been said. And so we have let it this way. (fieldnotes, 2004)

However, at the 63rd fishing day, they got into contact with the fishermen of Caris, who told them they were getting a higher price for the TS category. This time, all the fishermen could see

and hear for themselves that there was a difference in price. In addition to what Abdou had already told the others in the beginning of the voyage, everybody felt this was unfair, and they said to the intermediary:

At the moment you are even buying AFRICA for the price of TS, so now the time has come to buy everything for 150 FCFA/kg. If you agree with this we will continue, for we have left everything behind to come here and work, but if not, we will go home. (fieldnotes, 2004)

Since the commander decided that he could not increase the price, the fishermen decided to embark their pirogues and thus force the *bateau de ramassage* to return to Saint Louis.

During this voyage, neither the contract, nor the preparatory meeting were lived up to. A real messy middle terrain was created where the rule of the majority counted. One can conclude from both examples that a joint force is needed to change the situation. Even though Abdou might have been right about the sudden disappearance of the Africa category, he could not do anything about it, since the others did not want to join him. With the additional knowledge about the price on board of the other *bateau de ramassage*, which was open and verifiable for every one, the situation changed. All fishermen agreed and tried to negotiate a better price.

As soon as the *bateau* arrived in Saint Louis, Abdou and five others have tried to undertake steps against the intermediary. Their goal was to receive the right price for the right fish, as was concluded in the preparatory meeting. They went to the *services des pêches* and were told that they were right. They made an appointment to settle the problem with the intermediary two days later. However, instead of settling the problem, the authority now thought it was their own fault, since they had agreed with the prices once at sea. They then went to the gendarmerie and had a discussion with the intermediary there. The police could not settle the problem and asked both parties to come back a few days later, to see if they could come to an arrangement and if not, to take the case to court.

It is here where most of the group of fishermen walked out on Abdou:

They told me they could no longer participate, that we had to stop the fight, because our fathers had told us so, so that we could get our money and continue working. Since it was a matter of the entire group and the rest of the group did no longer want to continue, I thought it was better not continue on my own. I could not defend everything alone. (fieldnotes, 2004)

Finally, they settled the affair *à l'amiable*, that is, they let it the way it was and got paid 375 FCFA/kg for their EUROPE fish and 120 FCFA/kg for the rest. Yet again the importance of mutual action is pointed out. For the second time in this affair action is not taken because of a lack of mutuality. This time "the fathers" are the ones who block the continuation of the affair and head for a quick arrangement. This could have had several reasons. Abdou thought it was "because fishermen do not like to go to court" (fieldnotes, 2004). This could be because they find that one should not wash one's dirty linen in public or that they would not win after all. With regard to the last argument one fisherman stated:

Look, they, the intermediaries, when they go to the police, they will have acquaintances there. And when they go to the bank and want to borrow money, they will have a guarantee, their work as an intermediary is enough for the bank to give

them a loan. While when I go to the bank, I will get nothing, what could I give as guarantee? So what could we do against them? They stand stronger. (fieldnotes, 2004)

More important however, is the fear of fishermen of not going with the next voyage, and thus losing their work. The *capitaine du port* stated:

They [the commander and/or the intermediary] will tell you ‘you talk too much’ and debark you. People are afraid of them, not because they have a physical force or anything, but because they are afraid of losing their job. (fieldnotes, 2004)

Abdou gave a similar explanation:

People accepted to sell AFRICA as TS, for they wanted to keep their place on board for the next voyage. Because when one claims one’s rights as a fisherman on board, one will not be certain to depart the next time. (fieldnotes, 2004)

As a result of Abdou’s leading role in the ‘revolt’ against the intermediary and the commander, he got removed from the list. The intermediary had said to Abdou’s brother during the preparatory meeting for the next voyage: “Your brother’s *pirogue* can come on the voyage, but your brother himself cannot”. Finally two of Abdou’s *pirogues* and several of his brothers went on the next voyage. Before their departure, Abdou had given them an advice:

I told them: “you will just go to work and do what you have to do, but you will not revolt against anyone, because if you do you will be as me and you have seen how that went; people did not listen to me and thus there is no point at all in revolting.” (fieldnotes, 2004)

It is clear that with the accumulation of these kind of experiences, which are rather disappointing for the fishermen involved, the incentive for action, whether collective or individual, will diminish. This will certainly be the case when action is being suppressed from within the community, through the fathers of these fishermen in this example.

#### 4.5 The reaction of the state

The previous sections of this chapter have discussed the different types of problems and conflict that occurred during the *pêche au ramassage*. The problems that were mentioned in these sections all stem from observation reports<sup>56</sup> and were complemented by the accounts of fishermen, (ex) sailors and intermediaries. Each observation report has normally fallen on the desk of the Head of Observatory Department and the Director of the DPSP in Dakar. How did they and other representatives of the state react to the problems as described in these reports? Section 3.2.5 explained how the events in Angola have eventually led to the placement of an observer on board of every *bateau de ramassage* that leaves Saint Louis. The observation reports of the observers on their turn, have had their impact on the decision making process about the *pêche au ramassage*. Since state officers received detailed information about the actual situation

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<sup>56</sup> Except for the death of the fisherman in section 5.2 and the tricked balance in section 5.3



on board of these ships, it was no longer possible to ignore the problems that were going on. In sum, the decision to place an observer on board of each *bateau* did not only prevent that incidents as ‘Angola’ did not happen again, but it brought along another kind of information as well, namely about the conditions of life and work on board.

The observation reports gave rise to several reactions of the state. First of all, in the course of the years different meetings have been held and memoranda have been written to regulate the *pêche au ramassage*. On the basis of regularly recurring problems that were reported by observers, recently the earlier mentioned memorandum and ministerial instruction have been drafted<sup>57</sup>. According to the Director of the DPSP “these latest documents have more vigour than the previous ones, since these are real obligations, the others were just recommendations” (fieldnotes, 2004). Even though these documents have resulted in a more thorough control of the *pêche au ramassage* in terms of the age of fishermen on board, the inspection of the list of fishermen and the number of fire extinguishers on board, it has not yet tackled the problems of living and working conditions.

These living and working conditions seem to be a precarious case. The ministerial instruction mentions the following about the living conditions: “the shipowners should make sure that enough water and food is distributed to fishermen during the voyage”. This obligation has not been integrated in the contract, as signed in Saint Louis. Moreover, it’s formulation can be interpreted in many ways: what is “enough” water and food and who determines this? A state officer answered:

Well, the problem of determining what is “enough” could easily be solved. It would be sufficient to sit down at the table with the shipowners’ representatives, the administration and the fishermen’s representatives. Then we would talk about this and make sure all *bateaux de ramassage* lift themselves up to the level of the Portuguese<sup>58</sup>. – If this is so easy, then why did it not happen until today? – It did not happen, because the administration did not pose this problem. They did not want to stipulate a specific quantity and quality in this ministerial instruction. (fieldnotes, 2004)

In fact, the reaction of the state to the reported problems about the conditions of life on board is a deliberately vague formulation about the sufficiency of food and water. Before answering why this is the case, I will show other, similar reactions of the state towards these problems.

A second reaction is to refuse to discuss about it, or to pass on the responsibility to fishermen: “Fishermen can always decide to not go to work, when they do not get enough food. But I do not want to go into this detail of eating” (fieldnotes, 2004). Another state officer said:

There are cases of death on board. But that is normal, that someone falls or dies because of illness, it is like the population of a village that is taken each year at sea like this. Since I am here there is at least one death or more per year. (fieldnotes, 2004)

He reasons that since there are so many people involved in this practice, it is normal that there are people who die, as in a normal village people die each year as well. In this way he diplomatically gets around the causes of these deaths and the question if these could have been prevented when

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<sup>57</sup> *Sécurité de la pêche au ramassage, instruction ministérielle n°00255/MP/DPSP/OBS/SP du mai 2003 and note de service n°00661/DPSP/OBS/on du 12 août 2003*

<sup>58</sup> Of all the *bateaux de ramassage*, the Portuguese is the one that distributes the most food and water.

different action would have been taken. In a similar way is dealt with the debarking of 'revolting' fishermen:

We do not interfere with who is embarked or debarked. If you go on a voyage, the intermediary can always say that you cannot come on the next voyage. (...) You sign a contract for three months and the end of contract is the end of contract. There are always saboteurs, delinquents and drug addicts, you can have all kinds of people on board of your ship. And one single person can sabotage an entire voyage, while millions and millions have been spent already. (fieldnotes, 2004)

Yet again the fundamental issues are being evaded. It is true that one cannot work with delinquents or drug addicts on board, but are these the real reasons of debarking fishermen? Who is debarked and why this is the case seems not to be a concern for the state, which keeps far away from these kind of issues.

Although the ministerial instruction and the memorandum have been drawn up as a result of reported problems by observers, the accounts of observers are normally not directly taken for granted. They are getting accused for being dishonest and susceptible to corruption (fieldnotes, 2004):

Observers do not like to embark on these kind of boats, they find it boring to be on board of these ships during three months. That is why they write negative reports, so they hope the state will stop this kind of fishery. (fieldnotes, 2004)

People explained that if an observer wrote a normal, positive report, this meant that the observer and the shipowner or commander had made an arrangement together. As long as the relation between these two is alright, a positive report will be written, and no problems will be mentioned. However, when things have gone wrong between the two, a negative report will be written. In addition, the shipowner will come to the DPSP as well to complain about the corruption of the observer (fieldnotes, 2004). In either way, this reveals that there are problems on each voyage, whether the observer reports about them or not. However, when observers do not report about them, no action will be taken at all. When observers do report them, the attention is focussed on the sincerity of the observer and the supposed corruption that has took place, instead of on the problem itself. When I asked: "But what about the problems that occur on board?", a state officer answered:

Yes, these will always be there, there is nothing one can do about it, because it is very difficult for the shipowner to comply with these rules, they almost never comply with them. But as long as things go well between the observer and the shipowner you will hear nothing about this. (fieldnotes, 2004)

In sum, attempts for regulation are not far reaching enough and real issues are being avoided in various ways.

This does not mean however, that state officers are blank about the problems that occur on board of *bateaux de ramassage*. One can see that a lot of them struggle with these problems on a personal level, as this example shows:

We have to improve the living and working conditions on board. Personally I think there should be less *pirogues* on board of the *bateaux*. The people are piled up, piled

up like slaves in these boats. (another officer reacts): yes, this is really terrible, there are so many people on these boats, too many people. (fieldnotes, 2004)

Another one stated:

If the Koreans worked under the same conditions and ate and drank the same as the fishermen, the problem would be solved very, very quickly. (...) But that is not the case. There is a certain bourgeoisie on board of these ships, whereby the Koreans permit themselves to eat well and sleep in good cabins, while the fishermen do not, with only reason that they are the ones who navigate.

There is a clear tone of indignation beneath these two quotes. There is question of a struggle between what they personally think about the *pêche au ramassage* and their position as a state officer.

However, this struggle does not only take place on a personal level, but is reflected in the entire attitude of the state towards this practice, as discussed in section 3.2.5. This attitude is summarised in the following quote from an observation report:

I want to emphasise that the fishermen do not care about their living conditions. Their main worry is catch the products: to be chosen the first of the group and to earn a living. Given the crew and the embarked equipment on board, it will be very difficult to organise better living conditions on board of these *bateaux de ramassage*. In addition, these *bateaux de ramassage* are indispensable for the life of the fishermen of Saint Louis. (DPSP, 2000)

One could consider the first point he makes problematic. Is it true that fishermen do not care about their living conditions? Of course their main worry is to catch as many fish as possible, this is the reason they go on these voyages in the first place. There is not a lot of room left on board to improve the living conditions the fishermen, that is true. It is not impossible however. Indeed the *bateaux de ramassage* have become quite indispensable for the fishermen in Saint Louis. Yet, instead of stressing this importance in order to do something about the conditions on board, one could take this importance as an incentive to improve the situation. The better these conditions will be, the longer the practice will be able to continue. The calculation of the gains of the shipowners, even if it is a rough estimate, shows that there should be financial room for improvement. Another solution could be to draft and integrate different policies that could tackle the incentives for fishermen to go with the *bateaux de ramassage*. Integrated policy that focuses on the difficulties of fishing in Mauritania, the rarity of the resource in Saint Louis, the overpopulation of the island, and the lack of options in terms of employment, might diminish the pressure on the *bateaux de ramassage*. That way it would be economically profitable for the shipowners to do something about the living and working conditions on board, in order to entice fishermen to come with them. However, this seems to be a lot more difficult and less feasible road to take.

## 4.6 Concluding remarks

One of the state officers expressed his fear about the future of the *pêche au ramassage*:

Did you see those boats? On which they embark with two hundred and fifty people? I am afraid that one day it will go wrong. But it goes beyond fishing now, it has become a community. (fieldnotes, 2004)

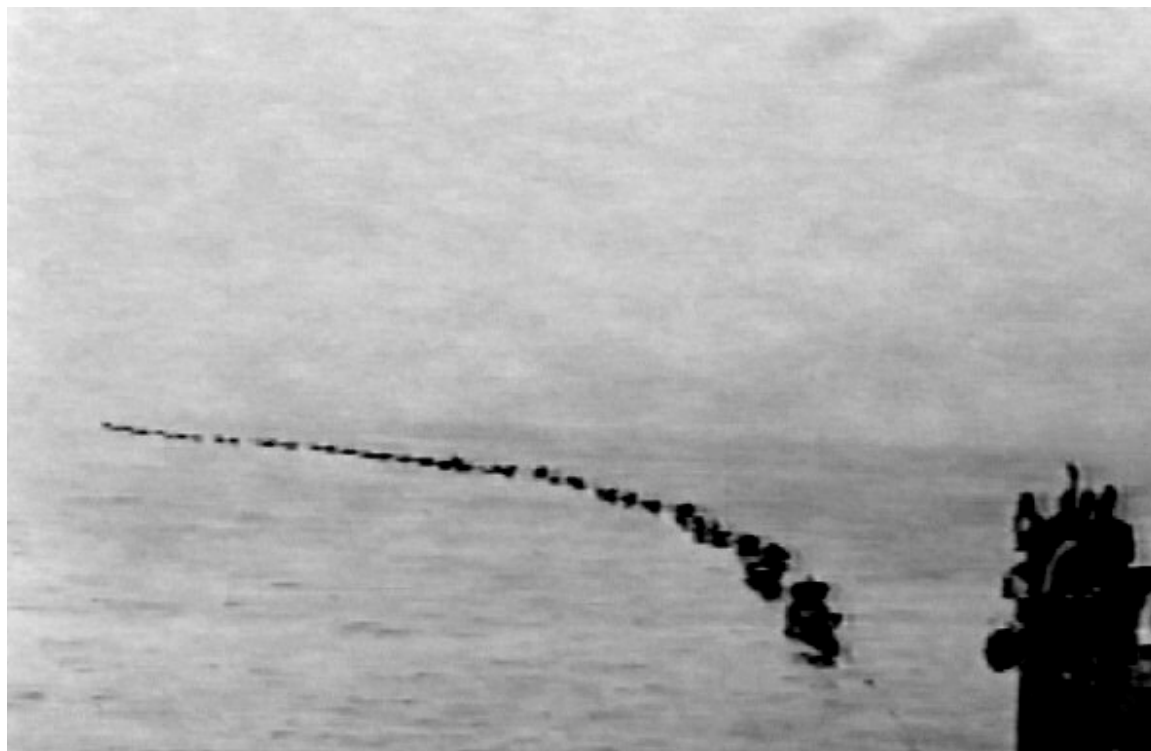
On the question what he thinks could go wrong he answered: “You have seen what has happened to the *Joola*<sup>59</sup>, a similar thing could happen with these boats, there are just too many people on them”. His next sentence: “But it goes beyond fishing now, it has become a community”, is a crucial statement. Not only can this be interpreted as an explanation of the little action that the state is undertaking to change the situation on board, but it has a deeper meaning as well. As this chapter has shown, the *pêche au ramassage* is indeed more than just fishing, and has become a community, in terms of a social phenomenon. Over the years there has been a process of institutionalisation of actions that evolve around the *pêche au ramassage*. Previous experiences are being passed on to the next generations, organisation of work and positions on board are being settled and known for everyone, which does not mean however that people do not try to change them. A complex network has emerged of interrelated arrangements, positions, experiences and discourse, which go beyond the pure activity of fishing. This is something one can literally see when one takes into account the exact scene where the activities and actions are taking place: the activity of fishing does not take place on board of the *bateaux de ramassage*, and yet the matters that take place on board are the most impressive and determinative for what the *pêche au ramassage* is or could be. Stated differently, it is not the fishing which determines the *pêche au ramassage*, but the things that happen on board of the *bateaux* and the position fishermen occupy in relation to the others, on the basis of what they get to eat, drink, sleep and work, to whom they have to listen and to whom they can or cannot turn. It goes beyond fishing now, and therefore it is so important to analyse this practice in all its shapes from a sociological point of view.

Doing this, one finds that at first sight this idea of taking along artisanal fishermen and their gear to waters that are abundant in fish seems a very good one. However, because of the many problems that exist on board as well as ashore, it is not such a profitable experience for fishermen in particular to go with these *bateaux*. In the latest memorandum of the Minister and the Director of the DPSP there are some efforts made to improve the situation on board, however, the real problems (of nourishment, sanitation, health) are not tackled or appear to be presented in a multi-interpretable way.

In addition, there is no integrated policy to tackle the overall situation of fishermen in Saint Louis and to release the pressure that pushes people to go with these *bateaux de ramassage*. The conflict with Mauritania is not being tackled and it is questionable how the situation will develop now that there has been a coup recently. Further, the overexploitation of the Saint Louisian waters is not being tackled, and nor are the problems of the *bateaux de ramassage* themselves. These problems are thus left with Saint Louisian fishermen themselves to solve.

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<sup>59</sup> The ‘*Joola*’ was the ferry between the north and south of Senegal, which sank on the 26<sup>th</sup> of September 2002, since it was too heavily packed with people. It carried around 1500 people while it was built to contain just 550. 970 People drowned.



4.2 Forty pirogues attached to a cord at the back of a *bateau de ramassage* (picture derived from a video)



4.3 Intermediary, commander and assistant of intermediary at the daily weighing, categorising and registration practice (picture derived from a video)



4.4 Inside view of one of the sleeping storeys on a *bateau de ramassage*. With a height of approximately 1.5 metres, fifty people sleep here. Four of these storeys gives place for two hundred fishermen (see also picture 4.1)



4.5 *Pirogues* laying piled up in the front of the *bateau*.





## 5. Conclusion

My dearest wish is that eventually we no longer distinguish artisanal fisheries from industrial fisheries, because the artisanal fisheries will be so developed that it will be modernised and will become industrial.<sup>60</sup> (fieldnotes, 2004)

This was the answer of the current Minister of Maritime Economics<sup>61</sup>, Djibo Leity Ka, to the question on his view on the future of artisanal and industrial fisheries in Senegal. Apparently the Minister has the idea that transformation of the artisanal fisheries into industrial fisheries is the ideal situation; that industrial fisheries are ‘modern’ and thus ‘better’ and that artisanal fisheries should go in that direction as well. This, whilst history and present have proven the contrary. In the introduction of this thesis it was already shown that projects to ‘industrialise’ the artisanal sector have failed in the past. Also, the artisanal sector has proven several times to be more successful than the industrial sector in terms of integration in the market, employment, investment and production. Over 420.000 people are directly or indirectly employed in artisanal fisheries, the catches of the artisanal sector account for eighty percent of the overall catches and the sector is good for sixty percent of the total fish exports. A lot has been going on in the international debate around Senegalese fisheries, since its artisanal sector is so important. The industrial sector, consisting of ‘national’ and foreign vessels, which mainly originate from the European Union, have been pointed at as posing a threat to the resource and therefore to the artisanal sector as well. Also, they would pose a threat to Senegalese food security, since with 75 percent of the protein intake, fish is the principal source of proteins for the Senegalese population.

Between this remark of the Minister, who wants artisanal fisheries to become industrial, and the debate about the supposed threat of industrial fisheries, because of its competition and conflict with the artisanal sector, lays a domain that is not touched upon. This is the domain of relations of complementarity between artisanal fisheries and industrial fisheries, which has remained quite unexplored since the years that these have evolved. That these relationships have not been explored does not mean that they do not exist. However strange this may seem to people who perceive of them as opposed actors or to people who see industrial fisheries as the ideal situation to aim for, this thesis has shown two examples of complementarity between artisanal and industrial fisheries that cannot be downplayed. Yet, this is not to present these relationships as cosy examples of cooperation where conflict and problems do not exist. Indeed, these do exist, but because of the ignorance of these relations, these problems have never really been brought to light as well. Neither has there been knowledge about what these forms of cooperation are and why these exist, nor on who benefits from these and who does not. This thesis has attempted to cast a light on exactly those issues.

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<sup>60</sup> *Mon vœux le plus chère c'est que à terme l'on ne distingue plus pêche artisanale de pêche industrielle, parce que la pêche artisanale sera tellement développée que ce sera modernisée et deviendra industrielle*

<sup>61</sup> After the departure of the former Minister of Fisheries, Pape Diouf, the Minister was reformed and received a new name; Ministry of Maritime Economics (*Ministère de L'Economie Maritime*). Not only fisheries, but also maritime transport now came under jurisdiction of this Ministry.



## 5.1 Baitfishing for tuna vessels

The first form of cooperation that was explained was the practice of baitfishing for tuna vessels by artisanal fishermen from Thiaroye. This practice involves seventeen pole-and-line tuna vessels and around two hundred artisanal fishermen, of which eight are contract holders. If it were not for the boasting of the artisanal fishermen about their fishing qualities, this practice would probably not have existed today. It would not have existed as well if the commanders of the tuna vessels did not recognize the fact that fishing bait with a small manoeuvrable *pirogue* and indeed qualified and experienced artisanal fishermen was more efficient than with their own big, inflexible tuna vessel. Yet, the artisanal fishermen did boast about their qualities and the commanders of the tuna vessels did see the efficiency and convenience of fishing with them, and now this practice does exist. The commander and consignment agency are saving time through this cooperation, which accelerates their turnover and thus enlarges their profit. The crew of the vessel can take a rest, since they do no longer have to fish for bait themselves. In fact, this cooperation has created progress through ‘retrogression’; the ‘modern’ tuna fishery is developing because of the integration of ‘traditional’ ways of production, which appear to be more efficient and flexible. The ideal of the Minister is thus caught up by reality; so-called modernisation of the fishing fleet is not always a road to success.

In addition, artisanal fisheries are developing as well, because of the extra income and strategic relationships they can get from this practice. The eight artisanal contract holders are the ones who benefit the most of it; for each ‘full’ vessel they receive one third of the share, which can range from 30,000 fcfa (€ 46) till 100,000 fcfa (€ 153) per vessel, depending on the price that is fixed and the fuel that is used for fishing. This can mount up to € 1224 per month for a contract holder with four vessels that arrive twice a month. Cooperative captains are in command of their artisanal crew, but do not get one third of the money. They will have to share the remaining two thirds with their crew; this is between 1500 FCFA (€ 2.30) and 10,000 FCFA (€ 15.40) per full vessel, depending on the crew size, which is between fifteen and twenty-five people, and again on the price that was fixed and the fuel that was used. Depending on the goodwill of the contract holder they will receive more than this, because of their position as captain on board. Also they have the opportunity to establish relationships with commanders, through which they can attain extra goods and services if they need them. ‘Ordinary’ fishermen, that is, men who only put in their working effort and are not owner of a *pirogue* or outboard motor, are benefiting the least of this practice. With regard to income they only get their share. Since the amount of money is fixed per full vessel, it implies extra work for lesser money if commanders decide to release the fish because of it’s supposed ‘tiredness’. So fishermen gain less if they work more, because they all have to pay for the fuel that is used for fishing. Consequently this tiredness of the fish is the main source of conflict and agitation between fishermen and the commander of the vessel.

Another finding was the fact that these pole-and-line vessels are the only type of fishery that is allowed to use purse seines with a mesh size of 16 millimetres, the smallest allowed mesh size in the Senegalese fisheries sector. If one would want to use the same net in a *pirogue*, the mesh size will have to be 28 millimetres at minimum. This small mesh size is meant to catch small pelagic species, favourably juvenile fish. It is here where a paradox in the Senegalese fisheries policy was found; while the state was meeting the demand for juvenile fish of pole-and-line fisheries by allowing them a small mesh size, it was campaigning against the catching of juveniles and the use of small mesh sizes in artisanal fisheries at the same time. This campaign, a joint action of the WWF, Océanium and the Ministry of Fisheries, was strengthened by a circular

letter written by the Minister of Fisheries. Thiaroye was the only locality where this *Legui Doyna* campaign was not received well. This had to do with this paradoxal attitude of the state towards the catching of juveniles, which was criticised by various fishermen and used as an excuse to not conform to the law and continue to fish with small mesh sizes as well.

This 'resistance' to the campaign had other reasons as well, since it raised a debate about two issues, namely the catching of juveniles and the use of the *monofilament*. Different arguments and reactions were used in this debate, ranging from arguments that point at the double standard of the government to arguments that point directly at the threat of these interventions to the certainty of livelihoods of fishermen; arguments that question the assumptions underlying these interventions; emotional arguments and arguments that are questioning the legitimacy of certain key figures in the interventions. The practice of baitfishing was thus not the only issue that influenced the local dynamics in the debate around the fishing of juveniles, but certainly did play a role in this. In the end, 'nothing happened' on February the 28<sup>th</sup> 2004, the limit that was set by the Minister of Fisheries for all fishermen to 'comply with the law'. Compliance with the law was for some individual fishermen reason to throw back fish about which they were anxious of it being too small. From the side of the state however, enforcement of this law was not carried out, which was partly due to the administrators in the field. Because of their (partial) integration in this field, they knew as well what would be acceptable for fishermen to comply with and what would not. The phase of 'talking and coming to a mutual understanding' about these issues was not yet closed according to one of these administrators, and thus 'nothing happened'.

## 5.2 The *pêche au ramassage*

Why not take along Senegalese artisanal fishermen and their *pirogues* on a freezer-trawler to fish in waters that are abundant in fish, so that they can gain an income and the frozen fish can be sold on the world market? This seems to be a great idea, seen the fact that fish stocks in Senegal are depleting, while other countries on the African coastline still have plenty of fish in their waters. This idea was born in 1979 and after some wanderings to find the right fishermen, it has found its base in Saint Louis in 1982. Ever since, Korean and Portuguese *bateaux de ramassage* have been coming to Saint Louis to pick up entire artisanal fishery units and take them to Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ivory Coast, Gabon and Angola to fish there. In 1986 there were four *bateaux*, on which fifteen to twenty *pirogues* and around hundred fishermen were taken along during forty-five days. This rose in 1995 till ten *bateaux*, sometimes carrying fifty-five *pirogues*, which means 275 fishermen. Today there are eight *bateaux* active, each going on voyage for three months with forty *pirogues*. The authorities set this limit of forty in 2002. Around twenty percent of the *pirogues* in Saint Louis are involved in this *pêche au ramassage*, providing work for sixteen hundred fishermen, around 128 Senegalese sailors and eight intermediaries. It was estimated that around fourteen percent of the people in Saint Louis directly and indirectly depend on this type of fishery. In other words, it is not a practice that can easily be ignored in its importance for Saint Louis.

To come back at the question of why not doing this, it was found that what seems to be a luminous idea at first sight, actually is working out in an unnecessary degrading way in practice. The main reason of this statement is the deplorable situation in which fishermen in particular find themselves on board of these ships. They are making days of at least sixteen hours, seven days a

week, with two litres of water per person to drink and for personal hygiene, two slices of bread and one warm meal of rice and fish a day, during three months. During these three months they get one day off, which is usually used to wash their clothes, clean the motors and repair the gear. Further, the places where they sleep remind of slave ships of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. They sell their catches to the shipowner for prices that are fixed in a contract that is used for all of these *bateaux de ramassage* and which is signed on level of the local authorities in Saint Louis. These prices, 375 FCFA (€ 0.57) for one kilogram of high value fish that is categorised as ‘EUROPA’ and 200 FCFA/kg (€ 0.31) for fish that falls in the category ‘AFRICA’, are ten to twenty times as low as on the local market in Senegal. Why then, if these conditions are so harsh, are sixteen hundred Saint Louisian fishermen going with these *bateaux* each year?

One of the answers was found exactly in this harshness. The (self) image of Saint Louisian fishermen, relies on a part on their reputation as hard workers who are used to difficult living and working conditions. This is something that they boast about themselves when explaining how other fishermen in Senegal did not support the conditions on board, while they did. Other factors that are pushing people to go with these *bateaux* are the growing pressure of the fishermen’s population, the ongoing depletion of the fishery resource in Saint Louis and the conflict with Mauritania. In addition, for fishermen it is a way of saving money, since they do not spend any money while at sea and get a relatively large amount at once at the end of the voyage. This amount is still nothing compared to what shipowners and intermediaries are gaining from this practice, nor from the price they would have gotten on the local market. This brings us to another reason why this situation is unnecessary degrading; it must be financially possible to improve the situation for fishermen on board seen the estimated 1,3 million euros that the shipowners are making on each voyage.

However, it does not seem like much is changing. One of the main actors who should be able to improve the situation is the state. The state has decided to involve itself in the regulation of this practice since it’s beginning, by drafting a contract between the shipowner and the fishermen. Yet, this practice has always been prohibited in Senegalese waters, since it involves transshipment, which is not allowed. The contract has been changed several times in the course of its history, whereby obligations of different people involved were added, deleted or sharpened. Further policy did not exist on this practice, until the event that took place in Angola in 1998. This obliged the authorities to take action and made them decide to send a Senegalese observer along with each voyage of the *bateaux de ramassage*. On their turn, the observers took along their observation reports, which ended on the desks of state officers at the DPSP in Dakar. This ‘officialised’ the observed problems on board, and these could no longer be ignored. A way of dealing with it thus became necessary.

In the course of the years several meetings have been held and memoranda have been written to regulate the *pêche au ramassage*, on the basis of the information in the observation reports. Even though these documents have been fortified in their application power (from recommendations to obligations), these have not tackled the problems of living and working conditions on board. Since the texts relating to these conditions are deliberately vague, these have no strength in practice. In addition, these texts are not integrated in the contract as is signed on the level of Saint Louis. When state officers are confronted to these problems of living and working conditions on board, they show different kinds of evasive reactions. Some refuse to discuss about it, others pass on the responsibility to fishermen. Also fishermen cannot count on support from the state when they are debarked by the intermediary and told that they will not go on a next voyage. Moreover, it is told that the observers themselves should not be taken too

seriously, since they are susceptible to corruption, thereby deriving attention away from the problems themselves.

Further, the contract is not correct. The intermediaries, Saint Louisian people who are employed by the shipowners to recruit the fishermen and manage them while on board, are incorrectly called ‘fishermen’s representatives’ in the contract. These people are not chosen by a collective of involved fishermen to represent them, but are recruited by the shipowner to find suitable and capable fishermen. This anomaly is known by the authorities, but is not changed. Another ambiguity of this contract is that it is practically not known by fishermen. They do not have direct contact with the local authorities, since this contact passes through the intermediaries. For fishermen the real contract is the verbal arrangements that are made in the preparatory meeting before each voyage between them and the intermediaries. However, since only the captains of *pirogues* and sometimes their fathers attend these meetings, this can give complications when there is disagreement at sea; after all the arrangements were verbal and not written anywhere, and the majority of fishermen were not present when they were made, so no rights can be derived from this. According to the local authorities problems are diminishing however, since the intermediary now has found a more or less fixed ‘crew’ of fishermen, by debarking anyone who created a problem, it now has become ‘like a family’ and no big problems are observed. This is characteristic of the state’s evasive attitude with regard to this practice.

### 5.3 Theory; concepts versus reality

He [Breton] shows in particular how agencies charged with the management of fisheries, more preoccupied with the biomass than with the social actors, ignore the social dynamics of local societies. (Chauveau & Jul-Larsen, 2000 : 67)

In the theoretical chapter of this thesis several concepts were set forth that were thought to be useful for the understanding and analysis of the observed realities. The theoretical objective of this thesis was to look to contribute to a better understanding of complex social situations and interactions, which are characterised by ambiguous and overlapping relations and processes between people. These social dynamics, for which agencies *and* theories that are focusing on the management of fisheries do not have eye for, have been at the centre of this research. The wider institutional dimension of fisheries and a reconnection to the sociological debate was argued to be of importance, in order to be able to better understand the ‘messy-middle’ terrain between artisanal and industrial fisheries.

An actor-oriented approach was thought to be useful in the analysis of this messy-middle terrain. The ‘multiple realities and diverse social practices of various actors’ were said to be important analysing tools. Indeed, these are. The most important example in this case is the position and the various names of intermediaries in the *pêche au ramassage*.<sup>62</sup> This is a beautiful example of the complexity of the social situation of the *pêche au ramassage*, since the intermediary indeed has these multiple ‘roles’ for different people at once. In fact, he could be perceived as the incarnation of the multiple realities of which he is part for other (groups of) people and which are reflected in the names he is given. Further, the fact that he is all this at

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<sup>62</sup> To bring back into memory, they were called ‘fishermen’s representative’ by the state and observers, ‘*dirigeant*’ by fishermen, ‘black shipowner’ by sailors, ‘*controleur*’ by shipowner representatives and ‘intermediary’ by themselves.

once, shows that he has a central position in this practice, he is as a spider in his web. Also, these names reflect the social practices in which he is involved and the position that he takes in with regard to the (groups of) people who call him by a certain name.

In fact, these names reflect and show not so much a 'messiness', but more an ambiguity of his position. Since logically, one could never be a 'fishermen's representative' and their '*controleur*' at the same time. However, this can only be understood when one combines this with the difference between procedures and processes. The status quo of the official contract is taken as standard, while the underlying dynamics and power relations are much more important and significant, since these reflect the actual reality. The choice of the authorities, shipowners, shipowners representatives and intermediaries themselves to take this contract as standard is a pragmatic one; as long as intermediaries are perceived of as representatives of fishermen, a real reflection on their position is not necessary and thus will not take place. Authorities thus do not have to '*mouiller*' themselves further in it by searching for a real fishermen's representative and for the other actors their position close to the authorities will be kept secure.

The shipowners have thus penetrated the local fisheries community of Saint Louis by means of the intermediary. By using someone who is originating from Saint Louis and belonging to that 'life-world', they have kept this life-world as 'closed' as possible. Further, a critic from inside the community on someone who is part of that community is more difficult than on someone from outside. It might not have been a conscientious choice to recruit people from inside the community for the above-mentioned reasons, but it certainly has these advantages for the shipowners. The fact that intermediaries are respected members of the community says enough. A combination of pragmatic choice, established positions and a legitimising discourse is at the basis of the clasp in which the people involved are holding each other.

This legitimisation of ones actions or position was a concept that was set forth in relation to the actor-oriented approach as well. The way in which legitimisation is used in the *pêche au ramassage* is to defend actions that are already going on. Fishermen are legitimising the fact that they are going on these voyages by a 'harshness' discourse, while they sometimes make clear that it can be too harsh as well. The state legitimises its non-action by pointing at the fact that this practice is prohibited in Senegal and therefore is not their responsibility. Another reason that is used is the social aspect of the practice, whereby emphasis is laid on the danger of its disappearance. The same accounts for the shipowner's representatives, who are legitimising their own positions by stating that in fact they are helping the fishermen of Saint Louis by giving them employment and the entire voyage for 'free'. Legitimation is thus not only used to take others along in ones project, as was stated in the theoretical chapter, but also to defend ones position, by giving a positive turn to things that might be quite negative in practice.

Another concept that is of importance here is the concept of agency. In the theoretical chapter a critique on the premature assumption of capability and knowledgeable of each social actor was made. Indeed, the question whether to what extent actors are capable and/or knowledgeable seems to be more interesting in this case. Ordinary fishermen in Saint Louis are not incapable to change their situation, but they are 'trapped' in relations of dependency, from which they cannot easily escape. When fathers want to be friends with intermediaries to be able to send their sons on a fishing voyage, their sons will not be able to revolt against this without bearing the consequences. Those who revolt are mostly the ones who have many other fishing options and not solely depend on the *pêche au ramassage*. However, there is no real association of fishermen that can represent them in a powerful way and put pressure on the authorities to improve the situation. One of the reasons can be that the local situation has become too mixed; in the same family one can find fishermen that go on these voyages and someone who is part of the

crew of sailors, while they are living next to the intermediary. Intermediaries have relationships with banks, police and the authorities, which enlarges their agency. It appeared that the biggest changes occur not from inside the 'community', but when accidents happen that obliges the authorities to take action, as was the case with 'Angola'.

These authorities are present on a local level in both Saint Louis and Thiaroye. The Ministry of Fisheries and the DPSP in particular are represented in the local *services regionales des pêches et de la surveillance* and in the *capitainerie du port* of Saint Louis. The heads of these departments are known by fishermen, yet the influence of fishermen on these people remains small. In Saint Louis the contact with these authorities goes through the intermediaries, except when there are problems between intermediaries and fishermen. However, fishermen do not seem to be able to take along these authorities in their 'projects' and change their situation. In Thiaroye the head of the *services des pêches* comes to Thiaroye himself to take part in meetings and discussions. Also fishermen know where to find him when there are problems. In addition, fishermen themselves seem to be more organised than in Saint Louis, which enables them to write letters for example to the Minister of Fisheries to show their discontent with the way in which things are going. This could as well be due to the 'traditional' power of the Lébou over the land in Dakar and their presence in governance.

All this to say that with regard to the concept of structure, it seems that this as well is not a undifferentiated black box, but a fluctuating combination of relations between people and places. As was stated in the theoretical chapter, the further out of reach a social aspect may be to an individual, the more this might present itself as a structure to this individual. Now, the representation of the state is present in both Saint Louis and Thiaroye, however it is more within reach in Thiaroye than in Saint Louis. Yet, I still think these people who represent the state, are not to be confused with structures in the sense of predetermined, pre-existent and autonomous entities. They are individuals who have access to a network of other individuals in Dakar (at the Ministry, the DPM, the DPSP), who are fulfilling positions which enables them to make authorised decisions. So, if at a local level they decide not to take action regarding the deplorable situation on board of the *bateau de ramassage*, or decide that it is still too early to take action against the use of the monofilament, not much will happen. The same state is thus present in different ways in these localities, therefore one cannot speak of one global structure.

With regard to the practice of baitfishing a critique can be made on the power of the concept of legitimisation. Although it was interesting to see how the chef de services des pêches used 'village and family' discourse to empower his words, he also explained the letter of the Minister in such a way that he knew was acceptable for the majority concerned. This acceptability was not so much derived from his legitimisation, but from his explanation of the letter. If he had said that the *monofilament* was under attack, this message would not have been accepted and would have created a rage amongst fishermen who use this net. This rage already exists against Haidar. Even though he attempts in his films to connect to life-worlds of fishermen, he does not succeed in taking them along in his project. The objective of his project and that of fishermen is just too different. In addition, his reputation is used by fishermen to illegitimise his intervention. The power of 'legitimation' is thus limited; it can only help to take along people in a direction that they were already going themselves, but does not have the power to push them in a direction they do not want to go.

Another form of legitimisation takes place when contract holders are fixing new contracts with commanders. This has to be arranged on a local level before the actual negotiation with the commanders can take place. In the practice of baitfishing itself the most recurring conflict is about fish that is thrown away while it is still alive, but too 'tired' according to the commander.

Agency is shown here in the shape of negotiation power; the captain of the pirogue and the commander negotiate about this, sometimes in favour of the former, then in favour of the latter. Overall this form of cooperation seems to be taking place on a greater level of equality than is the case in the *pêche au ramassage*.

The importance of the studying of the ‘wider institutional dimension’ as promoted by Chauveau and Jul-Larsen, has proven to be significant with regard to both practices. Would I have taken the official contract in the *pêche au ramassage* for granted and not looked any further, I would not have found the realities of this practice. The wider institutional dimension with regard to baitfishing showed how people react when their certainty versus uncertainty balance is at stake. Would I have had only eye for the fishing techniques that are used in this practice, this would have escaped my attention. Because of the focus in the theoretical debate on formal organisations and the strict divisions that have been made between local, national and global levels, the messy middle terrain has been ignored or not taken into account, since this did not fit into the picture or are exceptions to the rules. While these exceptions to the rules can be the most original and interesting practices of which much can be learned. It is therefore important to start and explore these exceptions, in order to find out why these have evolved there and what these can say about the ‘rule’. In this thesis, these exceptions *are* the rule in Saint Louis, and could have evolved anywhere on the Senegalese coast with regard to the baitfishing practice, if it was not for the geographical placement of Thiaroye and the accidentally origin of this practice.

## 5.4 Policy recommendations

This research is clearly not a research on (community based) natural resource management and consequently does not want to give policy recommendations in that direction. It did show however, that research in the domain of fisheries, which does not focus on the preservation of the resource, can be useful and interesting as well. It can even lead to useful policy recommendations on a social level, which might even have a positive influence on the resource as a side-effect.

With regard to both forms of complementary relationships between artisanal and industrial fisheries the authorities should no longer ignored or evaded, on a local (*services des pêches, capitainerie du port*) as well as on a national level (DPSP, Ministry of Maritime Economics). A reflection on these forms is necessary. This should involve questions such as; what exactly are these forms of cooperation, how do we perceive of them now and how should we perceive of them in the future? Which direction should we take with these relations? How can we make sure that these enlarge the profit for people who are now profiting the least from these, namely the ordinary artisanal fishermen?

The state will have to make choices to increase its credibility. It needs to come with a clear point of view about the mesh sizes of fishing nets. Thereby I think the state has two choices; or it increases the allowed mesh size for pole and line vessels, or it diminishes the allowed mesh size of artisanal purse seines. Since the majority of these vessels are originating from the European Union, the first option could already be negotiated in the new fishery agreements for 2005. There lies a task for the EU as well, it should reflect on the necessity of fishing bait with these small meshes and be flexible if this appears to be not the case. Only when the Senegalese state will openly set this double standard right, it will have more legitimacy to enforce fishermen to comply with the law as well.

The WWF and the Ministry of Maritime Economics should take fishermen's arguments concerning the content of the assumed negative effects of the monofilament seriously. It could be an idea to show with experiments on national television whether this net actually keeps on fishing perpetually or not. This way their arguments could be tested. Someone who is trusted by artisanal fishermen will have to contribute in this. The debate, which is now more or less stuck and going around in the same circle, could thus be lifted to a serious, relevant level, where arguments concerning the content could lead to new insights and maybe even a change of behaviour in the long run. Further, if the Ministry is really implied in prohibiting this monofilament, it should also compensate owners of these nets for their financial losses.

Also the Senegalese government and the European Union will have to reconsider the fishing opportunities for tuna. Tuna is seen as a yet unexhausted source of surplus of which almost unrestricted use can be made; tuna vessels are allowed to fish in the entire Senegalese EEZ, whereas other industrial vessels have to fish from six sea miles of the coast and further (Fishery agreement 2002-2006). However, since the fishing of tuna with longliners and pole-and-line vessels implies the use of bait, usually juveniles, there should be a reflection about the consequences this has on the resource. Thereby the cooperation in the baitfishing practice and the opportunities that this creates for artisanal fishermen should be taken into account, as well as the advantage of pole-and-line fishing for dolphins.

The pragmatic and evasive attitude of the state towards the *pêche au ramassage* has caused that there is no real reflection going on about what the *pêche au ramassage* is or what it should be. The state is aware of the fact that the 'fishermen's representatives' are not representing the fishermen but the shipowners, and it is time for the state to act on what they know. It should create the opportunity for a real fishermen's representative to be chosen by fishermen involved. Here organisations such as Fenagie Pêche and the CNPS have an important role to play; they should lobby for this reform on a local and national level and help fishermen in Saint Louis to organise themselves. In addition, the authorities should take action to improve the situation of their citizens on board of these ships. Especially now that the association of intermediaries is planning on and lobbying for the state to invest in a Senegalese *bateaux de ramassage* that will come in hand of this association, it is of great importance that the authorities review and reform this practice.

If the state invests in a Senegalese *bateau*, this gives the opportunity to get to real change of this practice, if the position of these intermediaries is taken for what it is and a real representative of fishermen will be chosen. Further it will be possible to raise the prices of the fish on board of this Senegalese *bateau* and improve the living conditions on board. This way, a competition position will be created with the other *bateaux*, since one can expect fishermen to only be willing to go with the Senegalese *bateau* and no longer accept the living conditions on the others. This could then create a change on the other *bateaux* as well, thereby improving the entire practice. In either way, it is no longer credible for the state and shipowners to evade the debate about the real working and living conditions that exist on board by stating that it is financially impossible to improve these. As the estimations have shown, there is plenty of room for improvement, and if these estimations are not correct according to the shipowners, then let them show this and have a transparent and constructive debate about the future of this practice. If this practice might ever receive attention in the international debate it is important as well that this debate is constructive. It still remains an important practice for Saint Louis and I think it is possible to change it for the better for fishermen involved.

It might be the question if this is going to happen however, if the Minister holds on to the view as was stated in the beginning of this chapter. Such a view on artisanal and industrial



fisheries cannot cope with the complex relationships that were described and explained here. For if one perceives of industrial fisheries as 'better', then how can one explain that these are deploying artisanal fisheries? In both cases artisanal fisheries are preferred above industrial fisheries, because of their efficiency, flexibility, know-how and cheap labour force. A more realistic view on these forms of cooperation, which go beyond fishing, is therefore necessary.

### 5.5 Shortcomings of this thesis

My fieldwork period covered a total of seven months, of which I have spent seven weeks in Thiaroye and five weeks in Saint Louis. As I have stated in the introduction, during my fieldwork I was interested not only in cooperation, but also in conflict and competition between artisanal and industrial fisheries. This meant that I have not carried out an exhaustive research on all complementary relations that exist between artisanal and industrial fisheries. I think it is important however to research the cooperation on the level of artisanal fishermen buying industrial bycatch as well. The differentiation in my focus had its consequences particularly in Thiaroye, where I was looking at many different things and issues at the same time. This was caused as well by the fact that this was the first time I actually got into contact with artisanal fisheries and consequently I had to learn a lot about the way in which things worked. Also, I literally fell into the full discussion about the Legui Doyna campaign, which was a 'hotter' issue than the practice of baitfishing. Consequently, I did not gather as much information about the practice of baitfishing as I could have, had I not been focussed on conflict and competition as well. One example of which I should have gathered more information is the experiences of ordinary fishermen. Also, I could have interviewed more commanders and consignment agents than I did.

Regarding the *pêche au ramassage* the biggest shortcoming of the research is that I have not been able to go on a voyage with a *bateau de ramassage*, because of several reasons. Most importantly was the lack of time and the fact that I am a woman. I do not think that it would be accepted if I wanted to go on a voyage. For this it is better to take along a Senegalese man, for language and acceptance reasons. However, I have tried to fill this 'gap' by using observation reports and the accounts of different actors involved. Also I have used a video that was shot in 1996 by one of the Koreans on board of a *bateau*. Another shortcoming is that I did not succeed in speaking to the shipowners themselves, nor in finding out who they were. Through the shipowners representatives this should be possible, however at the time I thought it was more important to focus on the situation and actors involved in Senegal. If a reflection process on this practice is to take place however, it is indispensable to involve them as well in the analysis. Another shortcoming is that I did not have contact with the authorities in the countries of destination for these *bateaux*, which give out the licenses for fishing in their waters.

## Epilogue

This thesis represents the closure of a five-year period of studying Development Studies. The choice for this study was a conscientious one; I really wanted to plunge into and learn more about development issues. Even though my ‘change-the-world-idealism’ had been tempered by realities that I had already found during several stays in Senegal, the idealism that was and still is there has been the main drive force behind this choice. The core of this idealism might be that I do not very well support and what I perceive of as unjust. I deliberately say ‘what I perceive of as unjust’, since injustice is a very subjective and flexible concept. However, injustice has been the thing that I have struggled with the most during my research period, in particular with regard to my period in Saint Louis. I think that research in Development Studies has to aim in some way at improving the situation of the people concerned, but in Saint Louis I had a sense of uselessness with regard to my research; what was I doing there, why was I bothering these people with my questions? This feeling was aggravated during one of my first interviews in Saint Louis. One of the fishermen in the room sat next to me and followed the discussion that was going on about the *pêche au ramassage*. At a given moment he said: “Well, this talking to you about this is not going to solve our problems either”. First the interpreter did not want to translate what he was saying, but after I insisted he did. Since I was already struggling with the use of me being there and with finding people prepared to talk to me, this remark struck straight into this feeling of uncertainty. I did not know what to answer him. Of course, I should have asked him what he thought was going to solve their problems, which problems he meant and so on. However, I was too busy with myself. Surprisingly he started to talk about the sleeping conditions on board and became a vital part of the discussion. Yet he had pointed at the question with which I am struggling until today.

This struggle might have found a kind of solution however. The following dialogue between a fisherman and a shipowner some things are strikingly similar to the situation in Saint Louis:

Geert (fisherman): Who gets the fish out of the sea? Who is risking his life every hour of the day? Who does not change his clothes in five, six weeks? Who is walking with hands full of salt? Who does not have water to wash his head and hands with? Who is sleeping as an animal in the sailors dwelling in cages two by two? Who is leaving mothers and wives to beg for alms? With twelve heads we are going at sea in a moment, of the entire share we are getting twenty-five, you seventy-five percent. We are doing the work; you are staying safely at home. Your ship is assured, and we, we can perish if an accident happens, *we* are not worth assurance.

Bos (shipowner): When you are lying in your cage tonight – as an animal of course – try and think about *my* risks when there is a bad catch, when the fishing gear or nets get lost, with damages, lighting in the mast, running into the ground and God knows what else! Lately shutters have washed away of the *Jacoba*, the entire entrenchment of the *Koningin Wilhelmina* washed away by water. This you do not count, you do not need to pay that! (...) You are laughing about that boy, since you don not know the worries *I* have (...) With me you do not have to worry about harbour costs, bait, trawling wages, provisions, tons, salt, I am not making you pay the loss of the gear, I am taking the rap for it myself when parts of the ship are breaking.

These quotes stem from the Dutch theatre play *Op Hoop van Zegen* (In Hope of Providence), which was written in 1900 by Herman Heijermans, as part of a series of plays that together should give a merciless analysis of the social injustice in the society of his time (Van den Bergh, 1995)<sup>63</sup>. Indeed it is striking how these texts of more than hundred years old coincide with the accounts of fishermen and shipowners representatives in Saint Louis. I do not say this to adhere to some kind of evolutionary developmentalist theory that presumes that developing countries are a century behind developed countries, however. I do believe that this play gives an excellent insight in the social-political position of fishermen, whether it was then or now. The entire play takes place ashore, no fishing activity is shown, but it does show how fishermen and their families are dependent on the shipowners, and how they are clasping each other in this dependency relationship as well. All this goes again, beyond fishing.

What is hopeful is with regard to this play, is that it has led to the adaptation of a ‘ship law’ in The Netherlands, which regulated the safety of the ships and thus made an end to the deadly situations on board (Ibid.). Theatre is accessible and gives the opportunity to regard a situation through the eyes of different actors, in order to create with this ensemble of viewpoints a miniature of the real situation. Of course, with regard to the usefulness of this research it could help if the information as was set forth in this thesis would reach authorities that are able to change the situation, on a local or international level. However, it might be more interesting to try and rewrite this theatre play into the context of Saint Louis and to play it there with local actors or even fishermen. This way, a reflection process from the inside of the community could be established and new life could be breathed into the debate about this practice.

I still think that it is a good idea to take along artisanal fishermen to fish in waters that are rich in fish. However, this should and could take place in better working and living conditions than is the case today.

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<sup>63</sup> Thanks to Paul Hoebink, who brought this play to my attention.

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## Appendix I The evolution of industrial fishing vessels

<b>Industrial Fishing</b>					
<b>Year</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>National vleet</b>	<b>Foreign vleet</b>	<b>EU</b>	<b>Non-EU</b>
1980	284	121	163	-	-
1985	239	154	85	-	-
1990	267	132	135	-	-
1994	222	127	95	83	12
1995	279	153	126	97	29
1996	305	182	123	88	35
1997	283	188	95	75	20
1998	348	213	135	95	40
1999	301	191	110	77	33
2000	290	193	97	75	22
2002	183	119	64	55	9
2003	217	150	67	63	4
2004	256	198	58	55	3

Source: for the years 1980 – 1990, DPM in: UNEP 2002: 53, for the years 1994 – 2004, DPSP



## Appendix II Different types of artisanal fisheries techniques<sup>64</sup>

### Purse Seines

The use of a seine of 300 till 400 meters long with a depth of forty meters enables the capture of fish through enclosure. The targetted species are most of all pelagics. The pirogues that are used are motorised with motors of 40 HP and measure 16 till 22 meters with a capacity of 16 till 25 tonnes.

### Line Fishing

The classic handline is made of nylon with a variable diameter and length. It has one till five hooks and is ballasted with lead. The demersal species are captured from an anchored pirogue. There are other types of handline fishery as well for the capture of cephalopodes (octopus etc).

### Fixed Nets

Nets which are made up of several layers, of which the length, depth and mesh size vary, depending in which species is targeted. These nets are thrown into the water, attached to a drifting pirogue or fixed between two anchored buoys. Then one has to wait for the fish to get attached in the nets.

### Encircling gill nets

For this type of fishery a sixteen meters long pirogue is needed, with a capacity of five tonnes and propelled by a 40 HP pirogue. The net measures 300 till 500 meters with a depth of ten till twenty meters. It can have a big mesh size for the capture of ethmoloses or a small mesh size for the capture of flat sardinellas.

### Fish pot

Fish pots are used for the capture of octopus.

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<sup>64</sup> Based on: Fenagie Pêche (2002), *Esquisse sur la Fenagie Pêche*, 'Les differents types de pêche'

Appendix III Contract *pêche au ramassage* 1984

CONTRAT D'ENGAGEMENT N° \_\_\_\_\_

du \_\_\_\_\_ au \_\_\_\_\_

LE REPRESENTANT DU BATEAU HEUNG YANG N° 3 /

NOM LEE / PRENOM HWA - KWON /

SOCIETE INCHANG INDUSTRY CO, LTD /

ASSURANCE BF 6857 /

LE REPRESENTANT DES PECHEURS Sénégalais à bord du bateau /

NOM GUEYE /

PRENOM OUSSIANE /

ADRESSE Rue BAKARY CAMARAI GUET N'DAR ST LOUIS /

N° CARTE D'IDENTITE 26272 /

Je Soussigné, Monsieur HWA - KWON LEE Capitaine du bateau HEUNG YANG N°  
représenté par OUSSIANE GUEYE certifie avoir engagé  
ce présent contrat avec les pêcheurs dont les noms suivent (VOIR EN ANNEXE) dans  
les conditions suivantes :

- 1°) Transport de tous les pêcheurs et de leurs équipements à ma charge ;
- 2°) Nourriture et logement des pêcheurs à bord à ma charge ;
- 3°) Carburant et réparation des moteurs à ma charge ;

.../...

